Republicans seize control of US Senate, House

Story on PAGE A9

EDWIN BACASMAS

FAMILY PORTRAIT. Adoring father, Mikey Arroyo, meets Mikaela Gloria in the arms of mom Angela.

PHILIPPINE DAILY
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Palace told to take coup talk seriously

Abadia says recruitment getting stronger

By Carlito Pablo and Armand N. Nocum

A COUP is indeed in the works.

So said retired Gen. Lisandro "Boy" Abadia, who served as Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) chief of staff under Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos.

Abadia said Malacañang should take coup threats seriously as "this thing (recruitment) is gaining ground basically because there are a lot of issues going against the administration."

"*Malakas* (It's going strong)," Abadia said yesterday of the recruitment drive being undertaken by people allegedly disgruntled with President Macapagal-Arroyo. He did not identify the people behind it.

Abadia said he himself had been getting calls from junior officers involved in the recruitment, asking him for guidance.

He had been summoned for a meeting with Ms Macapagal in Malacañang on Nov. 2 but the meeting was reset to next Saturday. "If this meeting pushes through, I intend to ask permission from the President to speak freely," he said.

Abadia said "the recruitment

PALACE/ A16

Defensor caught in 'revolving door' policy

By Martin P. Marfil and Fe Zamora

WITH 12 days remaining in his tenure, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Benjamin Defensor has become the object of intrigues.

Text messages received by reporters yesterday linked Defensor to a coup and accused him of using money from the military's budget for public relations in an effort to extend his term, which ends on Nov. 18.

Malacañang's "revolving door policy" in naming AFP chiefs of staff is being blamed for the intrigues mounted against Defensor.

A top-ranking general said President George W. Bush himself was not happy with President Macapagal-Arroyo's policy of assigning AFP chief of staff on "short-term basis."

DEFENSOR/ A16

Hanoi urged to take back 'boat people'

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

HANOI (via PLDT)—President Macapagal-Arroyo wants Vietnam to take back the remaining 1,600 "boat people" in Palawan.

"I hope we can finally resolve the issue of the remaining Vietnamese nationals in the Philippines," she said during bilateral talks with Vietnamese President Tran Duc Luong yesterday on her first state visit.

"For those who wish to come home to Vietnam, we hope that you will continue to accept them and facilitate the process of their repatriation."

The President also raised the issue with the three other top leaders of Vietnam—Prime Minister Phan

HANOI/ A4

MEMORY lane is frequently revisited by Nida Blanca's only daughter, Kaye, and her mother, Inocencia Alcueza, in their White Plains home, which has been made "safer" "with a lot of light shining through" but "silent" from the loss of the mistress of the house. VAL HANDUMON

Rod Strunk doesn't live here anymore

By Cathy Babao Guballa

ROD Strunk doesn't live here anymore—and it shows.

One of the major things that Nida Blanca's only child Kaye Torres did in the last year since Nida's murder was to rearrange the furniture in the room that her mother's husband used to occupy. Now it's like he never existed.

"This really was a den," says Elena de la Paz, Nida's assistant and confidante of 45 years. Looking around the room, she indicates where Rod's bed used to be and how only a part remains of the state-of-the-art equipment that he installed for recording.

The thick curtains that covered and sound-proofed the room have been taken down. "Kaye does not like dark rooms," Elena explains. "Isn't it brighter now?"

The bathroom that Rod used has been re-tiled in a bright white and all its previous fixtures discarded. A spanking-new sink and toilet bowl now sit there, alongside a shelf filled with toiletries of all kinds.

Security has also been fortified to shield the house's occupants from prying eyes and other undesirables. Grills were installed around what used to be an open garage and on all the windows.

It's a safer house now, where a lot of light shines through. It is al-

ROD/ A16

Explosives, attack plans found in MILF camp

ILIGAN CITY—Army soldiers have recovered explosives, bomb-making manuals and plans to attack places frequented by foreign tourists from a captured camp of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front in Central Mindanao, the military yesterday said.

"These (materials) confirm our suspicion that local terrorists are training in bomb making," Armed Forces spokesperson Brig. Gen. Eduardo Purificacion said.

Col. Ernesto Boac, chief of the Army's 401st Infantry Brigade, said soldiers seized 25 kg of the explosive chemical ammonium nitrate from the MILF camp, which they overran Friday in Sultan Gumander town, Lanao del Sur.

Troops also found sketches on how to assemble pipe bombs, along with documents showing the MILF had trained four 11-man teams to carry out bomb attacks on major urban centers where foreign tourists gather, Boac said.

"The presence of the MILF unit and the extent of training on bomb making meant they were preparing for something big," he said.

In a statement on Sunday, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Benjamin Defensor said soldiers had recovered two 60 mm mortar rounds, 21 dynamite sticks and six blasting caps with detonating cords.

Directions in making pipe bombs, written in a school

EXPLOSIVES/ A4

"ENJOY it to your heart's delight," a beaming GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia leads Mercedes Nakpil-Zialcita, one of the heirs of the original owner of Luna's "Parisian Life" during unveiling rites on Wednesday at the GSIS museum. ERIK ARAZAS

'Parisian Life' brings profit, pride to RP

By Juliet L. Javellana and Clarissa Batino

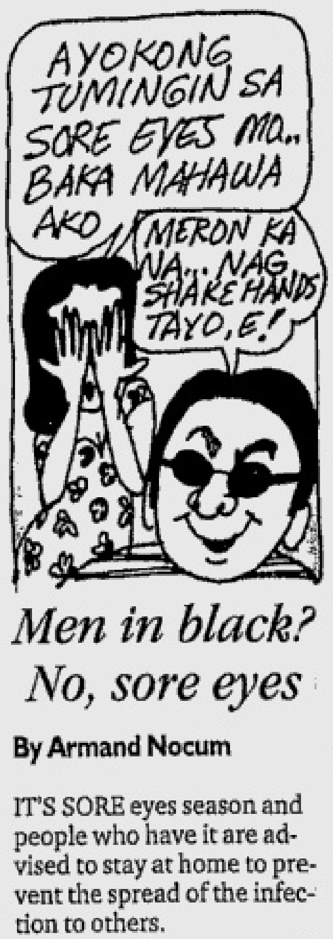
THE MOOD was festive as Government Service Insurance System president and general manager Winston Garcia and 88-year-old Mercedes Nakpil-Zialcita, one of the heirs of the painting's original owner, unveiled Juan Luna's 1892 oil painting in a two-hour ceremony yesterday morning.

GSIS bought the Luna painting two weeks ago at Christie's auction in Hong Kong for P46 million.

Nakpil-Zialcita, one of three surviving daughters of Katipunan heroes Julio Nakpil and Gregoria de Jesus, broke into a smile as installers took the 22x31 inches oil painting out of a crate and removed the seal in front of her, Garcia and other GSIS officials.

Her two other sisters, Francisca Nakpil-de Lange, 96, and Caridad Nakpil Santos Viola, 84, were invited to the affair as well but they were

PARISIAN/ A16


AYOKONG TUMINGIN SA SORE EYES MO.. BAKA MAHAWA AKO
MERON KA NA... NAG SHAKE HANDS TAYO, E!

Men in black? No, sore eyes

By Armand Nocum

IT'S SORE eyes season and people who have it are advised to stay at home to prevent the spread of the infection to others.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said reports from field offices of the Department of Health showed that the infection, characterized by the reddening of the eyes, was on the rise.

"We got the report some two weeks ago. It's a seasonal thing," he said.

Among the areas widely affected by sore eyes is Quezon City, he said.

MEN/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Bicol region and Eastern Visayas.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/07/02

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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Second FRONTPAGE

Kinks snag absentee voting bill

By Cynthia D. Balana

A TECHNICAL working group of the conference committee tasked with reconciling the two versions of the proposed absentee voting law for some seven million overseas Filipinos has found at least 12 conflicting provisions that need to be hammered out.

Sen. Edgardo Angara, head of the Senate panel in the bicameral committee, said one of these was the "sunset provision" in the version of the House of Representatives which stated that the proposed law will cover only the 2004 general elections.

The Senate version provides that the law to be passed by Congress will be effective immediately and will cover all future elections, unless changed or amended.

Angara said the 12 conflicting provisions, however, will not prevent the two houses of Congress from coming up with a more acceptable version that was worth the 15 years of waiting by overseas Filipinos.

The 11 other conflicting provisions were :

- The Senate version grants immigrants or green card holders the right to vote while the House version does not.
- The Senate version says that absentee voters can vote for president, vice president, senators and party-list representatives while the House version says they can vote for president and vice president only.
- The Senate version allows personal registration or by mail while the House version limits it to personal registration in place of residence.
- The House version requires that a copy of the registry of absentee voters be sent to immigration authorities of host countries, a provision not found in the Senate copy.
- The House version bans personal campaigning abroad while the Senate allows this.
- Representatives of Filipino overseas are to be named in the special board of election inspectors under the Senate version, which is absent in the House version.
- The Senate version provides for the appointment of representatives of Filipino overseas organizations to the special board of canvassers while the House version does not.
- Under the House version, the congressional oversight committee to be formed to monitor the implementation of the absentee voting law shall approve the implementing rules and regulations of the law while the Senate version merely requires consultations.
- The Senate version provides that accredited overseas Filipino organizations shall assist in the implementation of the law while the House version does not provide for an accreditation scheme.

The Senate-House technical working group started meeting yesterday to discuss technical points related to the two measures and set the stage for the smooth conduct of the bicameral committee work by senators and congressmen.

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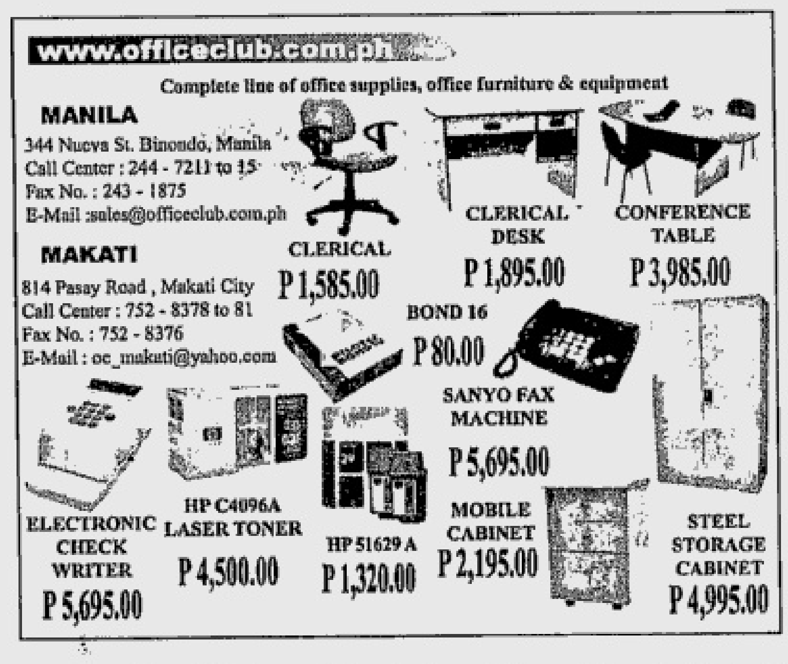

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Gloria inspires 'people power' in Cambodia

By D. Z. Pazzibugan

PHNOM PENH (via PLDT)—President Macapagal-Arroyo inspired a show of "people power" by foreign journalists who thought their Cambodian hosts were preventing them from covering her press conference Tuesday night.

Being one of the most articulate among the assembled leaders, Ms Macapagal had the attention of the more than 400 media organizations that covered the two-day Asean Leaders' Summit. So when she announced a press conference at the Hotel Inter-Continental—the site of the summit—major media groups scrambled to get hold of the limited passes.

The press conference was set at 6:45 p.m., but the Cambodian security made the journalists wait by the hotel's side entrance two hours before the appointed time.

When finally they were allowed in, they were surprised to see Cambodian security men blocking their way at the foot of the stairs leading to the conference venue.

Their frustration increased when the Cambodians would not explain why they were being blocked.

An American TV cameraman told the officers several times he could not afford to be late.

Minutes later, Filipino reporters were allowed to go up the stairs. But the foreign reporters were blocked again.

Annoyed, a Caucasian shouted: "We want to cover the press conference of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines. We want to get in now!"

The others began chanting loudly: "We want in, we want in!"

Alarmed, the Cambodians called for reinforcements. But they tried to ignore the journalists' chants.

The American cameraman tried to get past the guards, and was roughly pulled back.

After several minutes, a Cambodian man who claimed to be a protocol officer told the journalists that the press conference had not yet started.

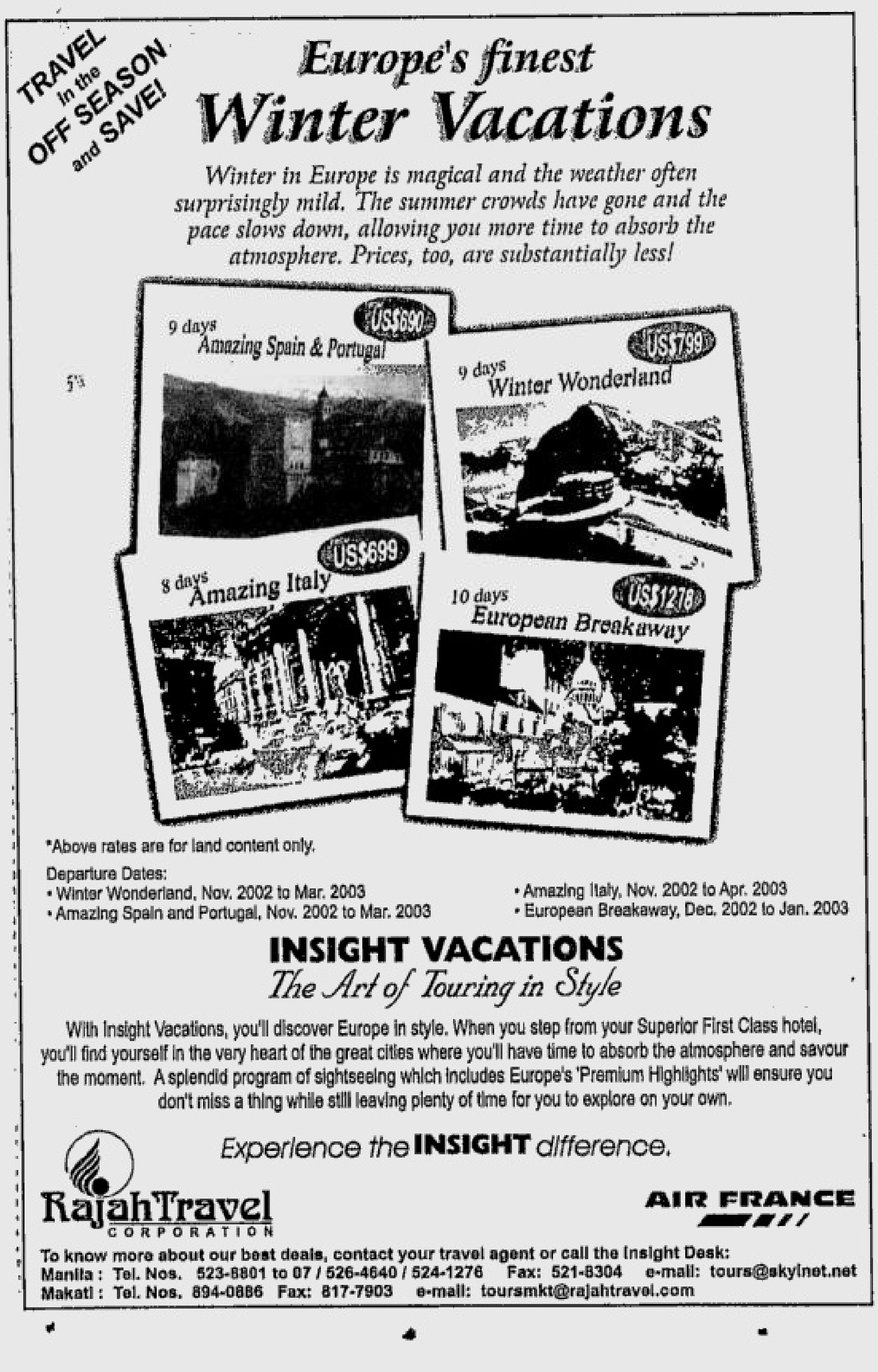
He pleaded with them to stop shouting, saying they would be let in as soon as the room had been cleared and set up.

The American said: "That's all we needed to know. But no one told us that."

WELCOME TO VIETNAM

With the imposing larger-than-life bust of Ho Chi Minh in the background, President Macapagal-Arroyo is welcomed to Hanoi by Vietnamese President Tran Duc Luong at the start of her two-day state visit to Vietnam. The visit aims to boost economic cooperation between the two Asean countries.

AFP



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Tourist arrivals up despite terror threat, travel advisories—Gordon

By Jerome Aning

DESPITE bombings and bomb threats, unfavorable travel advisories and negative international publicity, foreign visitor arrivals in the country actually increased by 36.7 percent last month, compared to the same period in 2001.

Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon, quoting data from the Bureau of Immigration, said 132,702 foreigners arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in October.

This is 36.7 percent more than the 97,081 recorded arrivals in the same month last year, he added.

Because the data did not cover arrivals at the country's other international airports—in Cebu, Davao and Laoag—the Tourism chief said he was still expecting a higher figure.

He said the country continued to be "one of the safest tourist destinations in the world," and that the increased tourist arrivals was an indication of the Philippine tourism industry's "resiliency" amid terrorist acts.

From January to October this year, Gordon said, the BI listed 1,578,198 foreign arrivals—4.36 percent up from 1,512,145 in the same 10-month period last year. He pointed out that this was 83.06 percent of the DOT's forecast of 1.9 million for 2002.

However, the statistics culled by DOT's Office of Tourism Information do not specify how many of the foreigners were actually tourists.

Official records from another DOT agency, the Office of Tourism Development Planning, likewise indicated months that posted double-digit increases: September with 15.2 percent; July, 10.6 percent; May, 10.4 percent; and June, 10 percent.

Even so, the DOT is bracing for the impact of new travel advisories recently issued by the United States, European countries, Australia and Japan, which cited likelihood for more terrorist attacks.

In spite of this, Gordon maintained he was optimistic.

"All countries have their share of crises," he said. "What is important is our resolve to fix the problems."

US to deport 8 RP aircraft mechanics

EIGHT Filipino aircraft mechanics are scheduled to be deported from the United States following a protracted detention period.

Filipino-Americans in Texas say they could have been arrested for suspected links to the al-Qaida terrorist network, due to the nature of their jobs.

Reports reaching the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) said the eight were among 10 Filipino aircraft mechanics nabbed on June 28 at the Meacham Airport in Dallas for alleged violation of US immigration laws.

The 10 Filipinos—who are still detained in Fort Worth—could have been among more than 60 Filipinos deported in the middle of the year, the DFA said.

"These eight have pleaded guilty to various charges, ranging from overstaying to violations in their working visas," said Assistant Secretary Victoriano Lecaros, DFA spokesperson. *Norman Bordadora*

Solon says smuggling behind low inflation

By Christine O. Avendaño

INFLATION remains unusually low despite power and oil price increases.

A House official suspects this is because smuggling has become rampant in the country.

Minority Leader Carlos Padilla yesterday said he was gathering information to support his theory that smuggling, and not any shrewd government policy, was keeping the inflation rate down.

Padilla said he had been closely observing the continued decline of the inflation rate under the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, in relation to the continued increases in the price of basic utilities.

But he said he was giving weight to one "expert's" opinion that inflation was down because the volume of credit itself was down. "Meaning," Padilla explained, "that there are no credit takers to help generate economic activity."

Government officials on Tuesday revealed that inflation was down at 2.7 percent in October, bringing the average inflation rate for the first 10 months of the year to just 3.2 percent—well within the government's inflation target of 4.5 to 5.5 percent for the whole of 2002.

'FLIGHT RISK'

DOJ presses SC to jail Mark Jimenez

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE JUSTICE department has asked the Supreme Court to allow the immediate arrest and detention of Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

In a comment filed with the Supreme Court late Tuesday, Justice Undersecretary Merceditas N. Gutierrez claimed that the "risk that respondent Jimenez will flee has increased with the issuance" of the Sept. 24 high court decision.

"Should respondent flee, the execution of this honorable court's decision would no longer serve any useful purpose and the main extradition case would become moot and academic," said Gutierrez.

She told the high court that the possible flight could be prevented by the implementation of its decision pending resolution of Jimenez' motion for reconsideration.

Gutierrez made the motion in a comment the justice department filed to assail the motion for reconsideration filed by Jimenez on Oct. 10.

Jimenez, through his lawyers from the Poblador Bautista & Reyes law office, asked the tribunal to reverse its Sept. 24 ruling cancelling his P1-million bail.

Jimenez posted the bail last year with the Manila Extradition Court, which is hearing the extradition case lodged against him by the justice department, in behalf of the United States federal government.

Jimenez is wanted in the US after he was charged in the US District Court in South Florida with two counts of conspiracy to defraud the government, four counts of tax evasion worth $3.5 million, two counts of wire fraud, six counts of false statements and 33 counts of illegal campaign contributions to the Democratic Party.

In a 20-page comment, Gutierrez and State Counsel Claro B. Flores cited Section 4, Rule 52 of the Rules of Court as ground for the immediate enforcement of the high court's ruling.

Gutierrez said that the rule allowed the execution of the judgment or final resolution sought to be reconsidered when there are good reasons available.

Quoting Section 4, she said: "The pendency of a motion for reconsideration filed on time and by the proper party shall stay the execution of the judgment or final resolution sought to be reconsidered unless the court, for good reasons, shall direct otherwise."

Gutierrez maintained that the possibility that Jimenez would escape prosecution was enough reason to cause his immediate arrest.

Gutierrez also asked the high court to deny Jimenez' motion, saying the decision sought to be reconsidered "contains no reversible error."

She enumerated several grounds to support the state's position:

- The motion for reconsideration does not present new substantial and valid arguments sufficient to warrant a second look on the decision
- The grant of bail was contrary to legal procedures and violated the extradition law
- The extradition court did not make a finding on low flight risk
- The ruling that bail is not a matter of right is consistent with law and prevailing jurisprudence.

Boy sends text bomb threat, causes panic

OLONGAPO CITY—A 10-year-old-boy caused panic when he sent a bomb threat, through text message, to a teacher at the Asinan Elementary School here.

The teacher, Rosario de la Cruz, said she received a text message on Sunday morning telling her that a bomb would explode in their school at 10:45 a.m. on Monday.

Dela Cruz said she did not recognize the number of the message sender and immediately reported the threat to the police.

Policemen were sent to the school on Monday and cordoned off the school's premises.

Insp. Jeric Villanueva, leader of the special weapons and tactics and explosive ordinance disposal team, inspected the school to look for the supposed bomb but they did not find any.

After the search, police started tracing the message sender and determined that it came from a Grade 5 pupil of De la Cruz.

The boy initially denied sending the bomb threat, but when police checked his cellular phone, the messages sent by police to the source of the threat were found in the phone's inbox.

The police did not arrest the boy, who was placed in his father's custody. *Allan Macatuno, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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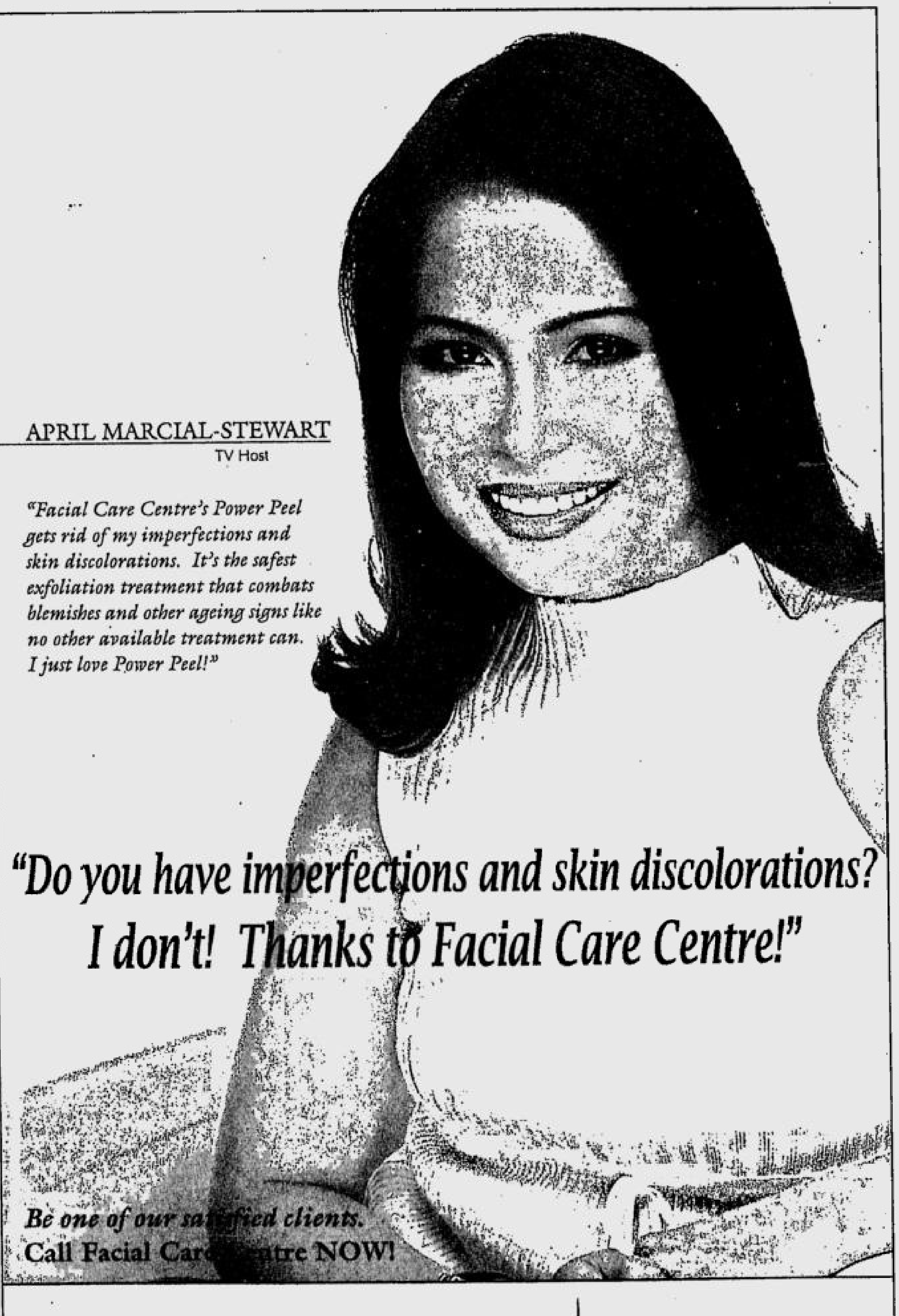
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MON. - FRI. (8 AM - 7 PM) / SAT. (8 AM - 5 PM)

Explosives, attack plans found in MILF camp

From page A1

notebook, said explosives consisting of potassium chloride, sugar and sulfuric or nitric acid could be detonated with a digital clock.

The notebook contained sketches and mathematical formulas on how to make three types of bombs.

"This is a deadly training manual. Those who were trained would become expert bomb makers once they graduated," said Lt. Col. Glenn Macasero, chief of Army Task Force Vulture, which captured the camp.

Boac said members of the MILF special operations teams had also trained in commando fighting, demolition, urban warfare and scuba diving.

He said the camp, one of three captured since the military launched its offensive starting in September, had been used by the MILF and Abu Sayyaf for joint training.

The MILF, which signed a ceasefire agreement with the government last year to pave the way for the holding of peace talks, has categorically denied involvement in terrorism, calling the accusations a ploy to discredit its struggle.

Norberto Gonzales, presidential adviser on special concerns and back-channel negotiator in the talks, on Tuesday said the MILF had promised to help the government in going after as many as 100 terrorists linked to Jemaah Islamiah and al-Qaida in Mindanao.

According to Gonzales, the targets of the manhunt are "former MILF members who have been enticed into terrorism."

He said the MILF offered to cooperate in the government's antiterror drive amid a US plan to put the group on its list of terrorist organizations. The US Embassy on Wednesday dismissed as speculative Gonzales' statement that Washington was wanting to blacklist the MILF.

MILF should know

Even so, the NBI-Interpol chief in Manila on Wednesday said the MILF should know who these terrorists were because they trained in MILF camps.

"Consistent investigation reports (by Interpol units in Southeast Asia) said Jemaah Islamiah members trained in MILF camps before these were overrun by government forces (in 2000)," lawyer Ricardo Diaz said.

The MILF has denied any links to the Southeast Asian militant group Jemaah Islamiah, which has been blamed for the Oct. 12 bombings in Bali, Indonesia, and to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network, which carried out the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in the United States.

Diaz said the Jemaah Islamiah terrorists might have volunteered to join the MILF struggle. The MILF might have taken them in, not knowing they would later turn to terrorism, he added.

Even so, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez on Wednesay played down the threat posed by Jemaah Islamiah, saying the terrorist group appeared to have been rooted out of the Philippines following the arrest of two Indonesian bombers.

"We have been monitoring this. The only incident would be the entry of (Fathur Rohman) al-Ghozi and (Agus) Dwikarna and we have neutralized them," Golez said at a news conference.

The two Jemaah Islamiah operatives have been arrested separately this year, convicted of illegal possession of explosives and sentenced to long prison terms in the country.

Golez also said there was also no confirmation that MILF rebels had been sheltering a Jemaah Islamiah cell in one of their main camps before it was overrun by a military offensive two years ago.

On Tuesday, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Benjamin Defensor said a Jemaah Islamiah cell was believed to have operated from Camp Abubakar, the main MILF base then.

But Golez said the "foreign-looking guys" reportedly seen in MILF camps might not have been foreigners. *Reports from AP, Norman Bordadora and Philip Tubeza*

Men in black? No, sore eyes

From page A1

Dayrit said sore eyes, or viral conjunctivitis, was "self-limiting" and that those infected did not have to take antibiotics in the absence of a secondary viral infection. The condition goes away after a week or two.

He advised those infected to take some rest and not report for work or school so they would not infect others.

The ailment is contagious and is easily spread when someone gets into contact with eye discharges from an infected person. Droplets caused by sneezing or blowing of the nose by an infected person can also spread the eye disease.

This is why it is not uncommon to find entire households infected with sore eyes.

Eye doctors warn the public against self-medication with over-the-counter eye medicines because this may only complicate the infection. It is better to see an eye specialist, they say.

There are many strains of the sore eyes virus and a person may develop resistance to a particular strain only to get infected by another.

The best way to prevent sore eyes is to wash one's hands regularly and refrain from sharing towels, eye medication and eye make-up. One should also refrain from touching the face of an infected person or kissing him.

Aside from sore eyes, the DOH also warned that cases of leptospirosis were on the rise. It has already infected 293 people in Metro Manila. The figure represents a 117-percent increase in cases compared to the same period last year.

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that is usually transmitted through direct contact with the urine of infected animals, especially rats, while wading through flood waters.

Among the areas hardest hit by the disease are Quezon City, Parañaque, Caloocan, Malabon and Valenzuela.

Hanoi urged . . .

From page A1

Van Khai; National Assembly chair Nguyen Van An; and Communist Party chair Nong Duc Manh.

But she told Tran that her administration would welcome those wanting to stay.

Thousands of Vietnamese fled the civil war in their country in the early 1970s in makeshift boats, thus the term "boat people." Many ended up in Palawan and settled there.

"Many of them have expressed the desire to settle in the Philippines," Ms Macapagal said. "We welcome them as they have proven to be law-abiding and productive members of our community. They are a daily reminder of the friendship and fraternity between the Philippines and Vietnam."

In an interview, Foreign Undersecretary Lauro Baja Jr. said the original arrangement was that the Vietnamese would move on to a third country like Australia but that many decided to stay and subsequently married Filipinos.

"Vietnam is willing to re-admit them if they would go back voluntarily," he said.

The President flew to Hanoi yesterday morning from Phnom Penh, where she attended the 8th Asean Leaders' Summit. First Gentleman Mike Arroyo was not with her, although protocol dictates that the First Couple travel together during state visits.

She was accompanied by a small party composed of Foreign Secretary Blas Ople, Baja, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, Presidential Management Staff chief Silvestre Afable, Assistant Secretary Cecilia Rebong and Philippine International Trading Corp. president Anthony Abad.

The campaign against terrorism was not far from the President's mind.

She invited Vietnam to accede to the Philippine-initiated regional agreement on information exchange on terrorism, as did Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia and recently Thailand.

She also reminded Vietnamese officials of their obligation to buy more Philippine goods.

Under a counter-trade agreement, Vietnam—currently the Philippines' chief source of rice—has to buy Philippine goods worth 50 percent of the value of rice that it sells.

Ms Macapagal said she brought Abad along to discuss with his Vietnamese counterparts how to fill in their import balance.

The two Presidents witnessed the signing of an agreement for areas of future cooperation.

In the same framework, they declared their determination to "continue with the process of confidence-building despite territorial disputes among various parties in the South China Sea."

The Philippines and Vietnam, together with China, Brunei, Malaysia and Taiwan, are the claimants to the Spratlys. Asean and China had just signed a Philippine-initiated declaration pledging no new occupation of the disputed islands.

The President will fly back to Manila this morning after a wreath-laying ceremony at the mausoleum of the late Vietnamese President Ho Chi Minh.

The mausoleum contains the preserved remains of the man who unified Vietnam under communist rule. While usually open to the public, it is closed at this time of year.

Ms Macapagal and her party are expected back in Manila at 2 p.m. today.

The President's elder son, Pampanga Vice Gov. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, said her mother had wanted to be with her first grandchild but had to attend to pressing state matters. *With a report from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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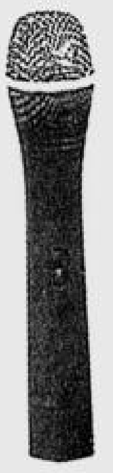

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LIBEL ACCUSER

Erap wants to see Inquirer—in court

By Volt Contreras

HE no longer wants to face his accusers in his plunder trial, but he's eager to appear before another court to pursue a libel case against the country's top military spy and the INQUIRER.

Jailed ex-president Joseph Estrada yesterday asked the Sandiganbayan to let him attend the Nov. 28 pre-trial conference on the P20-million damage suit he and his wife had lodged against Lt. Col. Victor Corpus and the INQUIRER.

Filed Sept. 3 last year by Estrada and his wife, opposition Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, the civil case is now with Judge Amelia Fabros, Branch 160 of the Pasig City Regional Trial Court.

The suit stemmed from an INQUIRER banner story on the alleged dollar accounts of Estrada's former police chief and now Sen. Panfilo Lacson, based on an interview with Corpus, head of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (ISAFP).

"They had acted on utter malice, bad faith, and with an evil motive under the premises as they did not even verify the Corpus report," Estrada then said in his libel complaint.

Estrada allegedly worked in cahoots with Lacson in stashing away millions of dollars abroad since 1996, money allegedly gained "from drug trafficking, kidnapping and other criminal activities."

Lacson filed a separate set of libel cases against INQUIRER reporters, editors and officials but seven of the nine counts he filed have been dismissed.

In the INQUIRER story on Aug. 5, 2001, Corpus produced a list of 18 alleged Lacson bank accounts in the US, Hong Kong and Canada, and his "six joint accounts" with Estrada at Citibank in Hong Kong.

Lacson's joint accounts with Estrada allegedly contained a total of $118.84 million, the ISAFP chief then said.

Sen. Ejercito was also identified in the same report as keeping a secret deposit in a Hong Kong bank worth around $180 million, a charge which the former First Lady has denied.

In a motion yesterday, the deposed president said the Pasig RTC last Oct. 15 ordered his personal appearance in the 8:30 a.m. proceedings.

Lawyer Cleofe Verzola, who wrote the motion, said Estrada needs to be at the pre-trial not just in view of the court order but also "because he wants to learn on a first-hand basis the nature of evidence against him which are the basis of the brazenly false and malicious accusation (that he has dollar accounts with Lacson)."

The motion, set for hearing this Monday, is expected to be opposed by state prosecutors in the Estrada plunder case.

Aside from Corpus, the respondents from the INQUIRER include publisher Isagani Yambot, editor in chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc, managing editor Jose Ma. Nolasco, and reporters Carlito Pablo and Christine Herrera.

Yesterday at the Sandiganbayan, prosecution presented two more witnesses to bolster one of the two perjury charges against Estrada, mainly on his alleged falsification of his 1998 Statement of Assets, Liabilities and Networth.

2ND LIFE AFTER SURGERY

Wounded eagle to soar again

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

AMIANAN: Bullet off its chest

AMIANAN may fly again soon. It just took 20 minutes to give it a second life.

The 2.5-foot high Philippine monkey-eating eagle found bleeding in a forest clearing in Isabela province last Oct. 25 underwent a successful operation yesterday to remove a bullet lodged in its left chest.

Veterinarians from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Protected Areas and Wildlife Bureau (PAWB) performed the procedure at the Birds International, Inc. (BII) hospital in Quezon City, starting around 9:45 a.m.

Leading the six-man surgical team was Dr. Friedrich Janeczek, a visiting German national who offered his expertise for free.

Dr. Mundita Lim, PAWB assistant director and one of the six doctors, said they recovered a .22-cal. slug. "We expect Amianan to recuperate in three days," Lim said.

Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez, who gave the bird its name (which means "north" in the Ilocano dialect), ordered an immediate ballistic exam on the bullet, either in Camp Crame or the National Bureau of Investigation.

BII, a private bird farm, is owned by aficionado Antonio de Dios. Located in Doña Carmen subdivision, Fairview, the facility specializes in parrot breeding, and operates a world-class avian hospital. Amianan will stay here for two or three more days to allow strict monitoring by doctors and wildlife experts.

Lim said the bird will then be brought back to the PAWB Rescue Center inside the Ninoy Aquino Park in Quezon City, where it will be under observation for another two months.

The doctor said Amianan is now being tube-fed with a special vitamin-rich soft diet of calf liver and chicken breast.

Dr. Janeczek strongly recommended further tests and treatment to prevent lead intoxication or poisoning, considering the length of time that the bullet was inside the bird's body.

Others in the surgical team were Dr. Steven Toledo of PAWB, Dr. Rizza Salinas of the DENR Rescue Center and Dr. Russel Celis of PAWB's Center for Philippine Raptors in Los Baños, Laguna.

They were assisted by BII resident veterinarian Dr. Melodia Nyela Magno, BII's Gina Jardinel and DENR's Philippine Raptor's Conservation Program project leader Althea Lota.

The wounded eagle was found in a pig trap by a certain Mr. Wangit in Mt. Susong Dalaga in San Mariano town, Isabela. The bird was turned over to the DENR Community Environment and Natural Resources Office (CENRO) in Palanan, Isabela.

Amianan is one of an estimated 200 Philippine monkey eating-eagles still remaining in the wild. Some 50 others are being held in various breeding facilities in the country.

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All's not lost, PCGG tells rights claimants

By Donna S. Cueto

ALL is not lost for victims of human rights violations. Or so the Presidential Commission on Good Government says.

As if to assure some 10,000 martial law victims whose bid in Hawaii to get their hands on the US$35-million Marcos Arelma assets had been put on hold, the PCGG on Tuesday said it planned to compensate the petitioners as soon as it was granted disposition of the frozen foreign deposits.

PCGG commissioner Ruben Carranza Jr. said the government's recent victory in the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, which recognized the Philippines' right to claim the Arelma funds, was not necessarily a loss for the victims.

Arelma, Inc. is a Panamanian corporation believed used as dummy by the family of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos for a Swiss bank account.

The petitioners had been opposing the government's claim on the money before the US District Court in Hawaii. The class suit was filed when the deposed president was living there in exile.

"This is not a win-lose (situation)," Carranza explained. "The decision of the US appelate court does not prevent the Philippine government from addressing the (victims' suit)."

He clarified, however, that the payment of the compensation should take place within the Philippine legal system.

Carranza said the US court's decision was important because it recognized the jurisdiction of Philippine courts over the Marcos cases. But he admitted that, because of this victory, the Hawaii petition would have to be suspended.

The PCGG had refused to let go of its claim on the Arelma funds, saying this was not part of the Marcos estate against which the human rights victims have a $2 billion judgment.

Carranza suggested that the petitioners support the human rights bill filed in Congress, which seeks to compensate them by exempting from the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program Law some $200 million of Marcos money.

The bill is still on second reading at the House of Representatives.

RP's biggest IPP is top polluter in US—Zubiri

THE COUNTRY'S largest independent power producer professes to conform to the strictest emission standards, but its record in the United States says otherwise, according to Rep. Miguel Zubiri.

Zubiri (Lakas, Bukidnon) said Mirant Philippines Corp., which boasts of an international certification for its coal-fired power plants in the country, has been found in the US to be releasing massive volumes of mercury, a known human neurotoxin, into the atmosphere.

In a press statement, he released the record of Mirant's US-based plants and their emission as of 1999:

- Its 1,492-megawatt coal/oil-fired Morgantown Generating Plant in Charles Country, Maryland emitted 335 pounds of mercury
- Its 853-MW Dickerson coal/gas/oil-fired Generating Plant Montgomery Country, also in Maryland, spewed out 285 pounds of mercury in the same year
- Its 2,429-MW coal/oil-fired Chalk Point Generating Plant in Prince George's Country: 344 lbs. of mercury
- The 411-MW Lovett Generating Plant in Tomkins Cove, New York: 35 lbs of mercury;
- The 482-MW coal-oil-fired Potomac River Generating Plant in Alexandria, Virginia: 72 lbs of mercury;
- The 119-MW coal-fired Birchwood Generating Plant in Fredericksburg, Va.: 0.00143 tons.

The figures were developed by the Environmental Working Group based on data submitted to the US Environmental Protection Agency by American power companies.

The pollution amounts listed only include mercury emitted through smokestacks directly into the air, Zubiri said.

He said Mirant currently operates seven power plants in the country with a combined capacity of about 2,000 MW.

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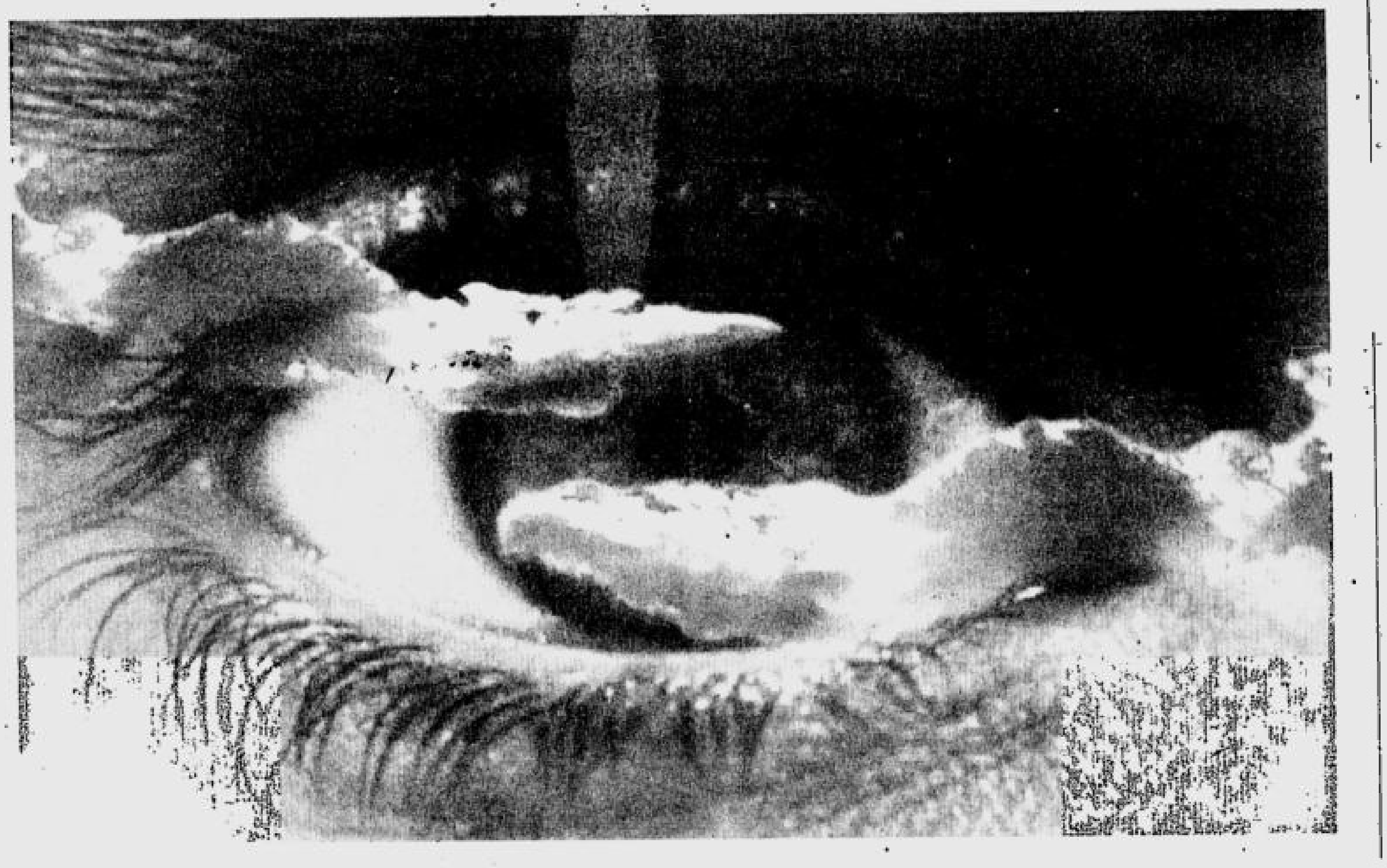

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Beyond terrorism

EDITORIAL

WHILE the leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations decided at their summit in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, to forge closer cooperation to fight terrorism, they moved out of its debilitating shadow by agreeing on two important landmark decisions with economic and security implications.

The first was the signing of a trade agreement between the 10 Asean nations and China, outlining a framework for establishing a free trade zone within 10 years. The second was a non-binding agreement in which China and Asean pledged to exercise "self-restraint" and avoid activities that would "complicate or escalate" territorial dispute over mostly uninhabited islands claimed by China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Philippines, Brunei and Malaysia.

The trade pact seeks to eliminate tariffs and non-tariff barriers on both goods and services by 2010. It establishes the framework for negotiations beginning next year toward the development of a free trade zone encompassing more than 1.7 billion people. It at the same time gives access to Asean goods to the vast Chinese market while acknowledging the growing power of the Chinese economy.

Asean trade with China was worth $41 billion in 2000, but China absorbs only 3 percent of the exports of the six biggest Asean economies while it accounts for just 5 percent of their exports. The pact gives China a head start over Japan in establishing a free trade zone with Asean, and India, a major economy in Asia, has rudely awakened to the need to expand trade with Asean. A free trade zone is not a one-way traffic. While Asean goods can gain entry into the Chinese market, cheap Chinese manufactures could flood the Asean markets and force them to be competitive.

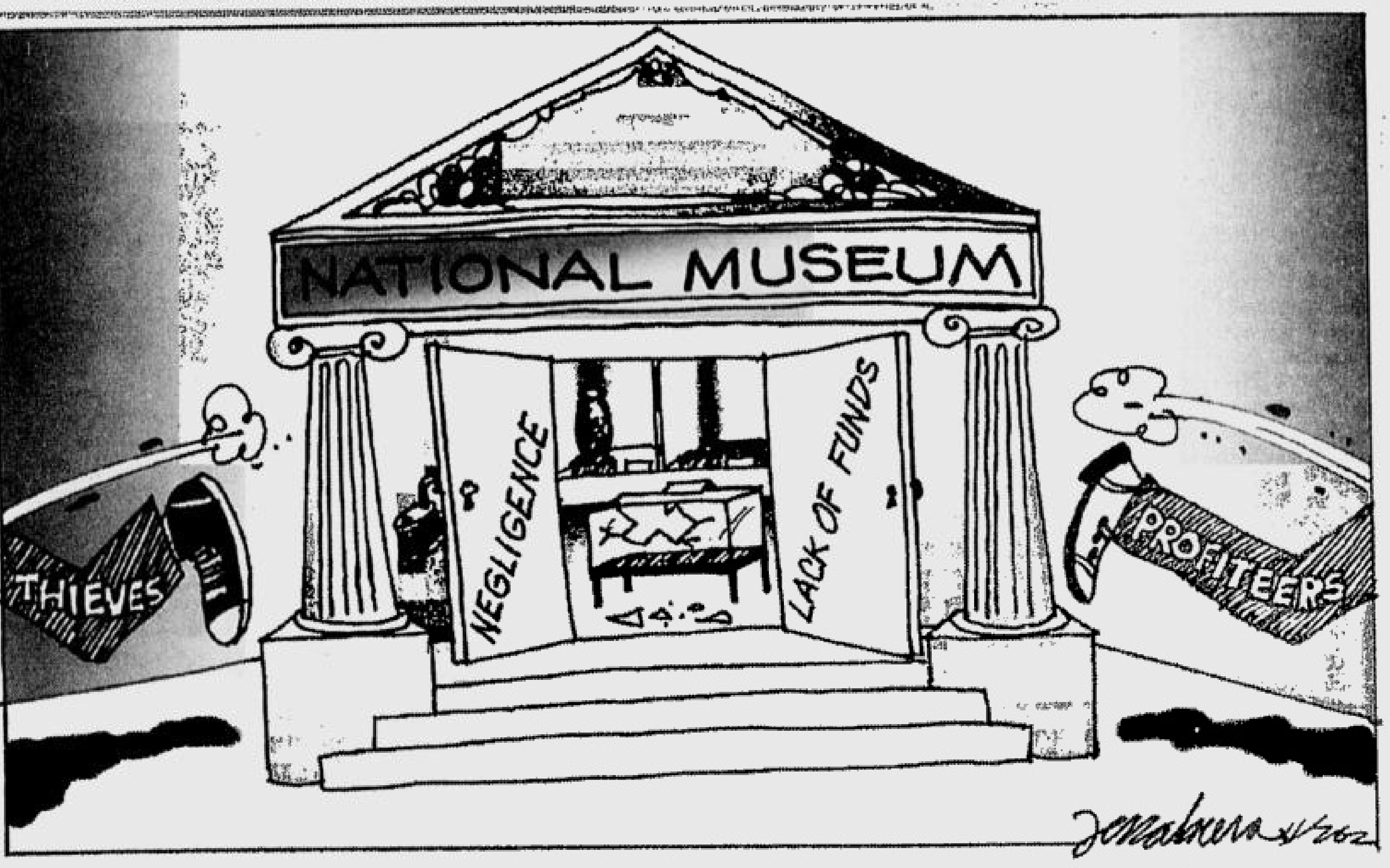
The agreement sets Asean on the road to economic integration with China, in the hope that, as one analyst put it, Asean would share China's prosperity. The pact has a bearing to security issues over territorial disputes in the South China Sea. With the integration of the Chinese and Asean economies, a free trade zone could be a restraining factor on Chinese territorial adventurism and encroachment of islands on the Spratly chain.

It is not without significance that the non-binding agreement to avoid provocative acts in the South China Sea was also signed. The establishment of a Code of Conduct governing the Spratlys has been in the works for several years, with the initiative emanating from the Philippines following a number of clashes with China over disputed territories. By signing the agreement, China has moved away from its previous position of settling disputes through bilateral negotiations rather than putting them under the wing of multilateral organizations.

Zhu Rongji, the Chinese premier, said the agreement reflected "a higher level of political trust" between China and Asean. The agreement can only lower tensions over these islands, after the Chinese vice minister of foreign affairs, Wang Yi, said the "main idea is to send a positive signal to the outside world that China and Asean have full capability to resolve disputes among themselves, peacefully through dialogue." The Asean declaration said that the countries would rely on "peaceful means without resorting to threat or use of force" to settle rather than attempting to stake their claims by establishing outposts on the reefs. This proviso is reassuring, given that the Philippines, among other Asean states, has protested against Chinese occupation of some reefs.

Whether the concept of behaving within a code of honor voluntarily will work will still have to be tested. But the declaration was vague over the issues of joint exploration of the South China Sea's mineral potential.

After Asean economic cooperation had been stunted by the 1997 financial crisis, the summit at Phnom Penh has kicked Asean out of its lethargy and has revived its drive for trade expansion within the region. That is the biggest achievement of the summit. The agreements rescue Asean from the paralyzing spell of the specter of terrorism that has struck at the heart of Asean with attacks in Bali and Zamboanga.



Collado denied due process, human rights

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

I WAS invited to be a panelist, along with lawyer Antonio Carolino, special prosecutor of the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation (BID), at the television talk show program "Dong Puno Nightly" on Channel 2 last Tuesday night. The subject was the sudden arrest and continued detention of retired Spanish lawyer Ramon Collado, president of the Philippine Retirement Authority Members Association (Prama) Foundation, which case has raised questions about the tactics of the BID against foreigners. The issue is: Is Collado being denied due process and his human rights? Is he being given "special treatment" by the BID and the Philippine Leisure and Retirement Authority (PLRA)? Meaning is he being persecuted and his deportation being railroaded? Is he being treated differently than other foreigners with similar offenses?

What is Collado's offense? He does not have a worker's permit from the Department of Labor, like so many other movie stars and basketball players. The latter were invited politely to the BID and asked nicely to get workers' permits so they can continue working. Two outstanding basketball stars of foreign nationalities were even given Filipino citizenships and allowed to play for Philippine national teams in international competitions.

But Collado was not given such a treatment. Last October, BID agents swooped down on the Prama Foundation's office, told him he has no Alien Employemt Permit (AEP), because of which his Special Retiree Resident's Visa (SRRV) was cancelled, which made him an "undocumented alien" for which reason he was arrested and promptly hauled off to the BID detention center in Bicutan. He was not given any previous notice that he needed an AEP and given enough time to secure one. He was not given any warning that if he failed to get one within the deadline, his visa would be cancelled and he would be arrested and deported as an "undocumented alien." He was never given any chance to correct things as the movie stars and basketball athletes were. He was notified, arrested and detained—without bail until now—all within the same hour.

Strictly speaking, Collado cannot be said to be employed because he has no employer. What work he is doing is as the president of the Prama Foundation, the association of foreign retirees invited to live here by the Philippine government, provided they deposited at least US$50,000 in a Philippine bank, paid fees to the government and invested in a business here.

Collado has been president of the Prama Foundation and consultant of the PLRA since 1984 and was never told that he needed an AEP. Suddenly last October, the PLRA "discovered" that he had no such permit, cancelled his special visa and told the BID to arrest and deport him.

What triggered the "discovery"? Because the PLRA unilaterally terminated valid contracts with the Prama Foundation—such as Collado's appointment as PLRA consultant, compulsory membership of foreign retirees in the Prama Foundation and collection by the PLRA of the membership dues (P2,000 a year). It was Collado who convinced the then PRA to concentrate the retirees' deposits—which amounted to hundreds of millions of pesos—into just four banks instead of being scattered in 21 banks, to earn higher interest. For this, the four banks gave the PLRA one-half percent management fee and the Prama Foundation another half-percent. But the PLRA board told the banks to increase its share to one percent, which deprived the Prama Foundation of its half-percent share.

Collado complained and filed a case in court. The court decided in Prama's favor, ordered the restoration of the cancelled contracts and the half-percent management fee to Prama. When the PLRA defied the court and refused to obey its orders, the court cited them for contempt and ordered the arrest of top PLRA officials including the members of the board. The board members are Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura, Trade Secretary Mar Roxas, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon and Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo. They avoided jail by posting bail. (In fairness to these four, however, while they are listed as the board members, it is actually their deputies who attend board meetings.)

Imagine the anger of these high and mighty Cabinet members of almost landing in jail because of the complaints of Collado. How dare this foreigner do this? He can't do this to high government officials. He must be put in his place. He deserves to be taught a lesson.

And that's why they discovered that Collado needs a work permit but has none. The rest is easy, Immigration Commissioner Domingo, on whose hands lie the fate of foreigners, being a member of the offended PLRA board. It was vengeance.

Lawyer Carolino said that the contempt order was issued in July but Collado's arrest was affected only last October, so it could not have been retaliation and vengeance that prompted Collado's arrest. My answer is that it probably took the PLRA that long to find the loophole that would nail Collado.

But that is not the only sin of Collado. He also filed complaints with the Bangko Sentral and the National Bureau of Investigation against Bankwise, one of Prama's depository banks, for "withdrawing various amounts (amounting to many millions of pesos) from its separate dollar and peso deposits and transferring them to the account of Seed Capital, the majority owner of Bankwise. All without Prama's authorization and without any documentation, according to Collado.

How can a bank do this? Isn't this against the law and Bangko Sentral regulations? Bankwise can, and did, because Seed Capital, the beneficiary of the money transfers, is the majority owner of the bank.

With Collado complaining and exposing these irregularities, wouldn't it be better if he were thrown out of the country so he cannot make trouble for Philippine officials and businessmen? That is why you can expect Collado's deportation to be railroaded through the BID.

What will happen to Prama's deposits when Collado is gone? That will be discussed in tomorrow's column.

Self-fulfilling prophecies

There's the Rub

Conrado de Quiros

WHAT'S Justice Secretary Hernando Perez so pissed off about?

He says it's unfair for the European Union to tag this country a terrorist haven, along with Afghanistan, Pakistan and Indonesia. Specifically, he says it's unfair that the Philippines should be depicted as a laboratory for al-Qaida. He says it's equally unfair that the United States and Europe should issue advisories to their nationals to steer clear of these parts.

This is so in particular, he says, because the Macapagal administration has been cracking down on terrorism more than any other country. "We have caused the arrest, prosecution and conviction of more suspected terrorists than any country in Europe. The mere fact that we do not allow terrorists to operate here is proof we are fighting terrorism on the home front."

That is all very nice, except for one thing. Which is: Who made the world think this country was a breeding ground for terrorists to begin with? Who made the world think this country was crawling with bombers linked to international terrorist organizations? It was not CNN, it was not foreign embassies, it was not the governments of other countries. It was Perez, it was GMA, it was the stooges who populate the National Security Council.

That is what they have been saying all this time. The reason we needed American troops in Basilan was that we were not fighting an ordinary bandit group, which was the Abu Sayyaf, but a terrorist one. The reason we could not make that group disappear from the face of the earth, despite the fact that government troops had presumably killed their leaders and decimated their ranks, was that they were enjoying terrorist support from outside, specifically from al-Qaida. The reason Zamboanga, home of Southcom, could be bombed was that al-Qaida had banded together with the Jemaah Islamiyah and was sowing terror in the Philippine south, and elsewhere.

That was why GMA was cajoling the other Asean countries to mount a more strenuous anti-terrorism effort. Presumably because the whole region had become a breeding ground for terrorism and was being lit up in flames even as she spoke. You keep saying these things, people are bound to believe you. As you sow, so shall you reap.

Quite incidentally, we were the only ones who were determined to make that the overriding concern of the Asean meeting in Cambodia. I watched the reports on BBC, and though they did mention Asean's anxieties about the effects of the Bali bombings on tourism, they did not mention GMA's efforts to railroad it in the direction of a terrorism forum. The central concern of that meeting was not terrorism, it was trade, and no small irony it was that our one President who was supposed to be an expert on trade would not devote her attention to that.

As far as the other Asean countries were concerned, the real problem was not how to deal with a huge and resurgent international terrorism but with a huge and resurgent country that offered both threat and opportunity to them. The real story in that meeting was the forging of free trade relations between China and the Asean, a development replete with awesome consequences for the region.

Why should anyone take comfort in this country's saber-rattling against terrorism? If I were an American, I'd be more scared of going to that small country in the Pacific that has been loudly advocating my president's view of the world. That is more likely to make it a real object of terrorist attacks. And certainly that Pacific country's ability to solve problems, real or imagined, has never been in evidence. What is in evidence is its capacity to make them worse.

Which brings me finally to a point I've been making this past couple of weeks. Namely, that the thing to worry about in this country—from both a local and foreign perspective—is not terrorism but crime. And worse, the government's predilection for lumping ordinary crime with terrorism, a thing that guarantees crime will never be solved, or curbed. GMA's grandstanding efforts abroad to show she is a pillar in the fight against terrorism is really just an excuse to cover up her inability to solve crime, notwithstanding her equally grandstanding efforts at home to turn Malacañang into Precinto Uno.

A friend of mine, a foreigner doing volunteer work, puts it this way: He is not particularly afraid of the bombings. He is no stranger to danger, having worked in war-torn countries before. All you have to do, he says, is steer clear of crowds, or malls, which he is not particularly loath to do anyway. He prefers more solitary pursuits. You get bombed, he says, you're just *malas*, the same thing can happen to you anywhere in the world. He would feel more safe in Mindanao, he says, than in Washington with that sniper around.

But one thing he has gotten scared of in this country is crime. The possibility that you could get kidnapped if you are fair-skinned is very real, the assumption being that you are rich and can pay ransom. It's not just the Abu Sayyaf that's out there—and that was what the Abu Sayyaf was to begin with, a kidnap gang—it's other groups as well, Muslim and Christian. Lest we forget, he says, various gangs were kidnapping the Chinese in Metro Manila before the Abu Sayyaf decided to diversify its targets to foreign nationals. And with the murders of foreign nationals in Metro Manila becoming more plentiful—even embassy officials are no longer exempt, as one senior Korean diplomat found out too late—it takes him more effort to want to go out these days than before.

What can one say to Hernando Perez being pissed off about this country being blacklisted as unsafe?

Tell your boss to stop goofing off. Do your job and stop crime.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

GMA projects well abroad, has image problem here

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

FROM REPORTS, President Macapagal-Arroyo has cut a very good impression among the world leaders in the Apec Conference last week in Los Cabos, Mexico and the 8th Asean Leaders Summit earlier this week in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. To begin with, GMA won plaudits from my fashion-conscious friends for looking quite attractive in her chic no-nonsense business outfits in those foreign conferences.

I've got news for the ladies. I queried her fashion coordinator, former model Joanne Zapanta-Andrada, about GMA's outfits and she said GMA's outfits for Apec, the Asean summit and the Hanoi State Visit were designed and tailored by a group of four Filipino designers: Inno Sotto, JC Buendia, the San Francisco-based Ito Curata (who designs for celebrities like American actress Sharon Stone and Princess Pia) and Joe Salazar. I must congratulate these Pinoy designers for giving GMA a simple and understated, but elegant look; *tamang-tama lang*—no fuss or frills, very classic *ang dating*. Truly, world-class *ang* Pinoy designers.

* * *

On the other hand, GMA's shoes were by the Pasig-based Janylin Shoes, using European technology, while her bags are by the Manila-based bag-maker, Carbon. Andrada emphasized GMA was a walking advertisement for RP-made goods as everything she wore abroad was local; for future trips, says Andrada, GMA will wear Marikina-designed shoes and Filipino textile materials.

With GMA as a walking model, perhaps she can get good markets for our clothes and accessories, thus triggering many jobs in allied fields of fashion and reviving our superiority in clothes, shoe-making, fibers, etc. We can be the Paris of Asia. For more details about these prospects, listen to Andrada as Cecile Alvarez and I interview her on our regular poverty-alleviation program on dzRH this Sunday 9:15 p.m.

* * *

The President came across in both conferences as a forceful and decisive Asian leader and visionary, and as Lakas national spokesman Heherson Alvarez put it, she has emerged as "an effective clear voice for the developing countries" as she articulated their plight in the face of rich member nations' protectionist trade policies. At various leaders' meetings GMA held her own, and her fellow state leaders seemed quite taken by her charm and articulateness; in fact the pint-sized RP leader handily stole the limelight from her fellow leaders in some instances. Moreover, GMA has spearheaded the anti-terrorist coalition among Asean nations and has quickly organized a regional anti-terrorist conference this Friday and Saturday here in Manila; she has also vigorously supported the accord on the conduct of parties in the South China Sea, which came into fruition after four years of collective work. I saw her interview with CNN during the Mexico conference and she projected self-confidence and talked a lot of sense. We Filipinos can be truly proud of GMA in those confabs, a merciful relief from Erap and his gang.

* * *

GMA's problem, as has been noted by various media commentators, is not projecting well abroad, for there she is like fish in water. Her difficulty is here at home, where beset by so many problems, she gives the impression to some sectors that she lacks the political will to curb these problems, notably the corruption in the bureaucracy and the worsening budget deficit. The President does not project the decisiveness and the certainty here that she does abroad, and the popular belief is that this stems from her politicking for 2004. Moreover, she appears to have a problem connecting to the *masa*, some of whom consider her actuations "plastic."

* * *

A Carmelite friend who has, in true Carmelite fashion, plenty of time to contemplate events in a God-given light, oftentimes sees an incredible confluence of events that we who are in the middle of the world fail to tie together. For instance, she pointed out what appears to be a fantastic confluence of events here at home and abroad this week. She notes that last Tuesday, Nov.5, the Muslim holy month of Ramadan began, during which the Muslim world fasts and prays for world peace, and here the Muslims are joined by the Christian world in spirit. Quite auspiciously, Nov. 9 was declared by the President as "National Day of Prayer" for the various faiths here. The nun reminds us of famed author Henri Nouwen's repeated admonition that "Prayer is finally the most effective weapon" for peace. Tomorrow, Nov. 8, again auspiciously, GMA convenes the two-day regional conference on terrorism—an event we could help with a lot of praying over.

* * *

My Carmelite friend lost no time pointing out that this confab's opening coincides with the feast of a Carmelite Blessed, Sr. Elizabeth of the Trinity, whose charism is the Trinity Indwelling or God within, a plea for "interiority." Interestingly, as she pointed out, the confab's closing, Nov. 9, is also a bigger feast as it is the "Dedication of the Lateran Church," referring to the Church of St. John Lateran in Rome, which is the "Mother and Head" of all churches the world over that it merits a feast all by itself in the Church calendar.

But in addition, tomorrow the world will be watching as the crucial Congress in China of its leaders, which takes place once every five years, opens. This Congress will elect the next generation of Chinese Communist leaders to replace the current aging leaders like President Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Zhu Rongji. In the light of so many world developments, this event cannot but be crucial to China and the world. The world atmosphere of prayer and fasting enveloping both the Muslim and Christian worlds at this time cannot but be beneficial to all the world and regional developments.

All coincidences? queries this nun, or a grand design by Someone up there?

Study cites fears on effects of precision bombing

NEWS ANALYSIS

Edith M. Lederer

UNITED NATIONS—The bombing of factories during the 1999 Nato air campaign in Yugoslavia may have long-term environmental and health effects, a new environmental report says, raising questions about targets in possible future conflicts such as Iraq.

The report, obtained Monday by The Associated Press, warns that precision bombing of industrial facilities can lead to contamination that is very difficult to clean up and may violate international humanitarian law.

Civilians living near the targets may also be exposed to greater health risks from contamination of the air, water and food products, said the report by the Institute for Energy and Environmental Research, a nonprofit organization based near Washington that investigates scientific issues.

"Precision targeting may be intended to minimize civilian damage, but the choice of targets may still violate the international laws of war, including the Geneva Conventions," said Nicole Deller, a lawyer and co-author of the study. "The deliberate targeting of industrial facilities that hold little military value yet can cause severe health and environmental damage appear to violate these laws."

The study noted that "precision weapons have been used in Afghanistan and are likely to be a major part of the military strategy in any proposed war with Iraq if it is carried out."

The institute expressed hope that legal, health and environmental issues raised by the study will be applied to other armed conflicts. These issues, it said, "should not be dismissed out of hand because countries are ruled by ruthless dictators."

The institute studied the Nato bombings of the Zastava car factory in Kragujevac, some 100 kilometers (60 miles) south of Belgrade, and a petrochemical plant, a fertilizer plant and an oil refinery in Pancevo, about 20 kilometers (12 miles) northeast of the capital. The two sites were designated as environmental "hot spots" by the UN Environment Program Balkans Task Force as a result of the bombings.

"There is no doubt that the bombings released large quantities of contaminants such as mercury but it is impossible to precisely determine their effects because of lack of data about pre-conflict pollution levels," said Sriram Gopal, a scientist at the institute who was the report's main author.

In Pancevo, the bombings resulted in major releases of the toxic chemicals dichloroethane and mercury, pollution created by bomb-related fires, and other environmental damage, the report said. In Kragujevac, bombed transformer stations at the car factory leaked toxic PCBs or polychlorinated biphenyls—which have been linked to some cancers.

The institute said its investigation was hampered because the US Department of Defense rejected its Freedom of Information Act request for the targeting criteria used during the bombings, handing over 42 blank pages that were marked declassified.

An analysis of the Yugoslav bombing campaign carried out this year by the US General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of Congress, also remains classified, it said.

Despite these setbacks and the incomplete data, the institute said the report shows the need to redefine how targets are chosen and how collateral damage caused by a bombing attack is evaluated.

"Currently collateral damage is measured in terms such as the number of civilian casualties or the cost of replacing property," Gopal said. "Long-term harm to the environment can be much more difficult to quantify and evaluate, despite its very significant costs."

In the case of the two Yugoslav sites, the study said, the PCBs and mercury and some of the other pollutants last for generations in the environment and can have long-term effects on the health of civilians living nearby.

"As modern warfare becomes more technologically sophisticated and targeting more precise, it is essential not to succumb to the idea that the damage on the ground is also precise and limited," the institute said.

"As this study indicates, the health and environmental consequences of precision bombing can affect unborn generations far into the future, even when the bombs are entirely successful in finding their targets." *AP*

Upheaval in a grain of rice

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

THE OPENING line of a marvelous award-winning novel ("The Stones Cry Out" by Hiraku Okuizumi) that I read recently goes: "Even the smallest stone in a riverbed has the entire history of the universe written on it." A Japanese officer and stone expert, ravaged by maggots and dying in a cave in Leyte, explains scientifically and metaphysically to a young soldier why.

But how more present and more alive this history is, in a seed, in a grain of rice, in an ear of corn. In a new born babe. We are star dust and more.

This is what swirled in my mind after I put down the book and read the papers on the tempest that arose over the meeting of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) that was held here last week. This was the first time in its 30-year history that the CGIAR held its annual meeting outside the confines of the World Bank headquarters in the United States.

The CGIAR is the largest public sector agricultural research effort and is mandated to serve the world's hungry. The CGIAR has 16 centers all over the world, one of which is the renowned International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) in Los Baños. IRRI, incidentally, holds the world's best collection of rice varieties, that is, over half a million varieties from 110 countries. Mind-boggling.

Now this collection is threatened by profit. A group of scientists and farmers would like to make this known.

So while the CGIAR meeting was going on, concerned farmers and scientists from here and abroad also converged nearby to protest and magnify issues. But the voices were drowned out by the noise of bomb blasts, bomb threats and other terrorist-related scares during the long weekend.

In 1994, IRRI and other CGIAR research centers all over the world entered into an agreement with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) to protect the seeds they hold in trust for humanity. This agreement is now supposed to be reviewed.

Many NGOs, among them Masipag (Farmer-Scientist Partnership for Development) and Searice, that are immersed in the issue of food security and agriculture, say that the agreement needs a complete overhaul because it contains no provisions for its enforcement. It does not protect the farmers' rights, it does not recognize the farmers' contribution in originally breeding the seeds that are not kept in the bank.

One example is how things went wrong with Jasmine Rice of Thailand. Despite farmers' protest, Jasmine Rice was patented—for profit—in the United States. The Thais lost part of their heritage. If you ask me, that was far, far worse than Filipinos losing a Luna painting at a Christie's auction.

Masipag and other like-minded groups believe that plants, animals, micro-organisms and their parts, at all taxonomic levels, as well as biological processes for their production are not patentable. Masipag works to give back to farmers control over genetic and biologic resources. Masipag farmers preserve endangered rice varieties by growing them in their farms thus preventing their extinction and control by private profit-oriented entities.

Within the CGIAR there is a so-called NGO Committee, that could give voice to civil society groups and farmers especially. But in the past year, more than half of those in this committee resigned and those remaining intend to "freeze" their participation in the coming year. Why?

One of the things that triggered this was the CGIAR's failure to act, since the discovery about a year ago, that genetically modified (GM)corn had contaminated corn's center of diversity in Mexico. The Mexico-based International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT)—IRRI's counterpart on corn and is part of the CGIAR network—failed to respond to civil society's persistent request to look into the genetic contamination and despite the Mexican government recognition of this genetic invasion.

Just as alarming to scientists and farmers is the perceived increasing influence and membership of the so-called "gene giants." Syngenta Foundation for Agriculture (of Syngenta, the world's largest agrochemical company) became the CGIAR's newest member this year, getting a seat in the CIMMYT board.

The NGO Committee within the CGIAR summarizes CGIAR's failure thus:

- It has failed to support an immediate moratorium on the release of GM crops into their centers despite the Mexico happening.
- In the face of increased control of private entities, it has failed to uphold the FAO-CGIAR trust agreement that requires germplasm and its genetic parts and components currently in the CGIAR gene banks, to be kept in a public domain.
- The CGIAR has been actively promoting genetic engineering technology and products incompatible with farmer-led agro-ecological research, further marginalizing farming communities.

According to Masipag, the NGO Committee's abdication is a resounding no-confidence vote from civil society.

Like a pebble on a river bed or a grain of sand on a beach, a grain of rice also holds the history of life in this universe. The cycles and seasons it goes through and how it dies and becomes part of our bodies and becomes earth again, resurrecting as new life forms in an amazing web of life—how awesome to ponder.

There is more to a grain for rice than the issue of patenting and feeding the hungry of this world. We are what we eat.

Book for funder-seekers. Recently launched was "Proposal Writing Guidebook" by Danilo D. Pineda which would be useful for NGOs and POs and their fund-seeking expeditions. The book shares step-by-step ways to write project proposals and how to increase their chances of approval. It also contains information on international and Philippine sources of funding. Those interested could call 5310084 or 0919-229-9780.

* * *

Comments to cerespd@info.com

Daddy

YOUNG BLOOD

Tish A. Martinez

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

MY Daddy is a silent person. He is a man of few words and subtle actions. He is the kind of person that you wouldn't notice in class because he was too busy studying. In his high school and college years, my Daddy did not have much of a social life and any fashion sense. It is a wonder that he ended up with my Mommy. Not only was Mommy an overachiever in her high school and college years, she was also considered one of the prettiest faces on campus and she was very popular. My parents are the archetype of the theory that opposites attract. My parents always vary in their opinions and the way they want to raise their children. Thus, sparking many quarrels between them. Still, I admire them for not splitting up.

Back to my Dad, my Daddy is a hydro-geologist. He knows everything about rocks, precious stones and of course, water. My daddy also graduated from the same high school that I attended from my freshman to my junior years. (Despite that fact, he fully supported me when I decided that I didn't want to be there.) This spelled such a problem for me because my Dad was known as the local science whiz. I did not excel in science and math at all, though I was pretty good in linguistics. I was the local science wuzz (loser).

My Dad's teachers and former classmates were constantly comparing me to him. I knew I could never be like my Dad and that saddened me. I am not the academic type of person; I am not the science type of person. Instead, I went around campus, sketching trees and people. I often forgot to take my books home during exam week. I wrote poems when I was supposed to be taking down notes in physics. And I was constantly in trouble with the guidance office because I was always late for classes, I vandalized comfort rooms and I always insisted on my point with my teachers. Thus, was the high school life of the daughter of the former model boy of the school.

By now, you may think that my Daddy was fairly disappointed with the delinquent offspring that he somehow produced. Well, he wasn't. My Dad understood what it was like to be angst-filled and have your hormones raging inside you. I was surprised he didn't get mad at me the first time the guidance counselor sent him a letter to request for a dialogue. It was like he expected it all along. He told me that I was different from him and Mommy, and that he understood that I didn't mean to make any trouble. Well, around five letters from the guidance office later, he was still saying the same thing. My Daddy loved me even though I was always letting him down and I didn't meet his expectations. In fact, I screwed up my sophomore year so badly that I ended up in the last section during my junior year. I thought my Dad would get mad at me but he still kept his cool.

My Daddy does not like the idea of me having a boyfriend this early. But of course, I had a boyfriend behind his back. My illegal relationships lasted for more than two years and yet when he found out he didn't scold me. I knew he was right all along but I couldn't get myself to admit it.

One of the things I remember vividly about Daddy was the time I went out with a friend at two in the morning. My aunt was almost hysterical when I got back but since my Dad wasn't there to see the fun, no one else reacted. The next day, when I talked with my Dad, he asked me about my early morning rendezvous. And then he said nothing. I was expecting that I would at least be grounded or banned from using the telephone. Well, I wasn't.

Maybe not disciplining me so much taught me to be more responsible with what I do. My Dad did not punish me but I had created my own personal hell. I was punishing myself and Daddy understood. Daddy is not a man of many words; he is a man of silent, subtle actions. He goes with me to rock concerts even though he thinks that the music is too loud and the people too crazy. My Dad likes to know about the guys I meet and possibly meet them too because he wants to make sure that the guy I go out with is good looking enough and worthy of him and his daughter. My Dad goes to great heights just to make sure that I get what I want and I'm okay. My Daddy spoils me and acts as if I am still a baby at 16.

No, I'm not complaining.

Daddy taught me to be thankful for what I have and to make the best of every circumstance. He taught me to be practical and to live within my means. I would not be writing this article if my Dad had not supported my writing endeavors. Most of all, my Daddy loves me too much.

I tell my Daddy that he is a hero, whenever he volunteers to wash the dishes. I want him to know that he is really my hero and that I love him very much. I did not normally tell him that. I nearly lost my chance.

When I was about to graduate from grade school, my Dad was diagnosed with multiple organ malfunctions. It was a very rare case. Aside from this, my Dad was also diabetic, hypertensive and had a hypertensive thyroid. My Dad was given about a year to live. When I learned that his check-up in St. Luke's Medical Center ended with his being confined at the intensive care unit of the hospital, I was devastated.

I remember the day he was rushed to the ICU. He brought me to school as usual. He didn't fetch me though. I was worried that I would not be able to go home. When I did get home, they told me that Daddy was having a check-up at the hospital. My daddy did not want to let me know that he was at the ICU because he feared that it would affect my upcoming entrance exam for the Philippine Science High School.

And so for a few days I was fooled. I believed that Daddy was all right. After my entrance exam, I went to the hospital to see my Daddy. Nothing prepared me for what I saw. I could barely recognize my Dad. He was so thin and he had a lot of tubes attached to him. I couldn't stop crying. I was so afraid that I would lose my super hero.

My Mommy tried to calm me down and assure me that everything was going to be fine. It didn't work because I saw how sick Daddy was. My Dad stayed in the hospital for about two weeks. During his stay, it was discovered that not only was his heart failing but his kidneys weren't working very well too. I prayed and prayed that he would get well. I did not want to lose him. I wanted him to be at my wedding, I wanted him to see me graduate from medical school. I wanted him to live.

It is good that the Lord heard my pleas.

Today, my Dad still brings and fetches me from school. He still prepares my lunch when Mom can't. Most importantly, he is alive and well with us. I don't know what I would do if I had lost my Dad to sickness. I will never be ready to lose my super hero.

I am happy that Daddy is still with me. I still have a guide and an adviser to help me through my tumultuous teenage life. I still have a father who loves me so much.

Tish A. Martinez, 16, is a senior at the Jose Abad Santos Memorial School (JASMS) High School.

Too much double-talk all around

PRESIDENTIAL spokesman Rigoberto Tiglao sounds like a hypocrite, if not a traitor, when he "extends the hands of friendship" to his former comrades in the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army. As an erstwhile revolutionary, he must know very well that an amnesty offer is absolutely unacceptable to them. It is tantamount to saying—in the words of AFP Chief of Staff Benjamin Defensor—"surrender or die."

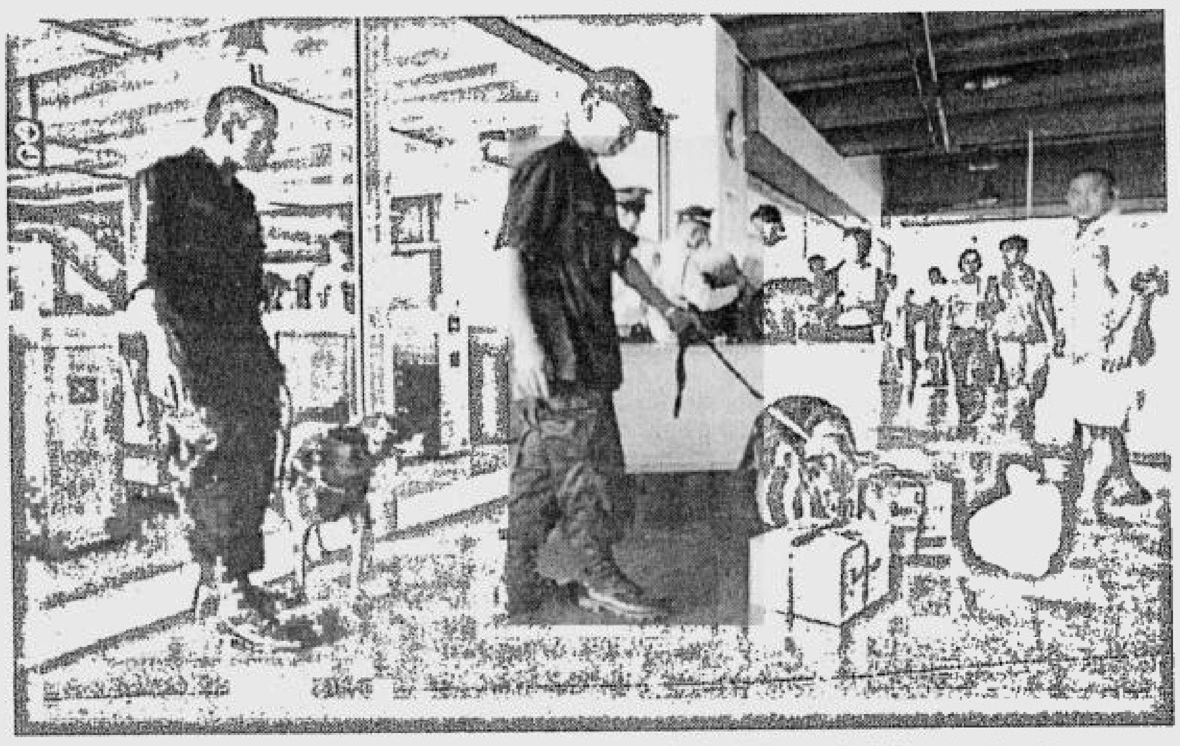
The only answer to the insurgency problem is negotiations, not amnesty. When President Macapagal-Arroyo accepted the US government's designation of the CPP/NPA as a foreign terrorist organization as her own, and even sent her emissary, Foreign Secretary Blas Ople, to Europe to convince the European countries of the same, she practically shut the door to any peace negotiations. That 95 percent of the Filipino people do not want peace talks anymore is a lie, and an insult to all peace-loving Filipinos. Why can't we heed the recent call of the Christian churches to talk peace? Even Vice President Teofisto Guingona himself is one of the thousands of signatories to that urgent petition for going back to the negotiating table.

In the midst of so much double-talk on both sides, let us sober up and call for honesty and sincerity in talking peace. For the government to say that it wants peace, while at the same time allowing the US military to assist our armed forces in conducting the war, is utmost insincerity. On the other side, if the National Democratic Front really wants peace, there is no place for political assassinations, kidnappings, hostage-taking, destruction of power stations etc., neither for tactical nor strategic offensives. When presidential adviser Eduardo Ermita seems to accept these activities as normal "for purpose of building up negotiating power," he undermines the very process of peace building. If they cannot agree on a ceasefire, then at least they should engage in confidence-building on both sides. Let us talk peace and really mean business. If this ends up in a civil war, as Joma Sison predicts, we ourselves are to be blamed because we did not care enough.

—ARNOLD VAN VUGT,
Hareb Center,
Cagayan de Oro City

Trust our security forces

THE GLOBAL outcry against terrorism created by the 9/11 disaster in New York has created a paranoia all over the world that terror lurks everywhere. The Philippines, even before the 9/11 incident, had its own experience, but the global paranoia was so contagious that our politicians started releasing unbridled statements against the counterinsurgency and intelligence operations of the military and the police forces. The members of Congress, especially, have shown no qualms in blowing up to the detriment of the security and stability of the nation, the alleged failures of the very institutions that have the constitutional responsibility of protecting the people and the State. It seems that Congress has forgotten its responsibility as a national institution that shares the collective duty to stabilize and unify the nation. Railing in public against these forces to the point of ridiculing them may give lawmakers some political mileage but it divides the nation and creates mistrust against the military and police forces.



The members of Congress know how best to go about investigating alleged failures in military and police operations. Instead of assaulting openly the integrity and operational deficiencies of the military and the police, they should call the responsible officials in executive session to look into what's wrong and help in bringing about the necessary actions to improve the peace and order situation in the country.

Let's face it, despite the meager resources in men, money and sophisticated equipment, the operations of our military and forces in intelligence and in counterinsurgency compare creditably with those of the Israeli military and Mossad operations which react but could not prevent the almost daily incursions of Palestinian bombers and relentless bombings inside Israeli territory; and, even with the US military combined with the FBI and the CIA, the disastrous 9/11 events happened, and this got the world community into a war that knows no border and against an enemy that strikes stealthily and violently.

To the credit of Philippine intelligence, 9/11 could have been averted had US intelligence given the proper attention and read the Philippine intelligence reports more correctly. I read in the papers that a similar debacle of the 9/11 intensity could have happened in Singapore had it not been for the correct reading and timely coordination between Singaporean and Philippine intelligence authorities.

In many parts of the world, bombings and other acts of terrorism are happening. We are not exempted, but this is not a reason for our security forces to lean on or a reason for our national leaders to divide the nation against them. Our security forces are doing their best despite their limited resources. Congress should recognize this. Only Congress can do what is needed to improve their capability.

—FORTUNATO U. ABAT,
major general, Armed Forces
of the Philippines (ret.),
forab@quickweb.com.ph

Needed: a credible strategy against terrorism

THE PHILIPPINES enters the war against terrorism with severe handicaps.

First, as an organization, the Philippine state is weak. Because many do not pay taxes, the government's revenues are limited. Like other civil servants, the police and the military are poorly compensated. Nor do they have up-to-date equipment. The Abu Sayaff's speedboat outran the Navy's. The government does not have the money to buy more dogs to sniff bombs. Moreover, the government has not been serious about its right to limit the ownership of firearms. Back in the 1960s, the Philippines was already notorious as the one country in East Asia where gunfights broke out on city streets. Nor does the state require travelers to identify themselves. You can board a domestic plane and register at a provincial hotel without an ID. Thus all sorts of foreign criminals—terrorists, drug pushers, kidnappers—regard these islands as a haven.

Second, the state seems not to have a policy of attraction. Terrorism is born out of despair. The desperate latch on to any ideology that offers hope. Unfortunately, one such ideology is fundamentalism. Palestinian freedom fighters blow themselves up in crowded areas, for they despair that the Israeli government will listen to their cry for justice. Israel's superior intelligence apparatus cannot protect the citizenry from such attacks. President Macapagal-Arroyo states that poverty drives people to terrorism. Thus far, however, her administration has not presented a strategy for combating poverty and injustice. And yet a well-publicized strategy can foster hope among the oppressed and help isolate would-be terrorists. In a truly strong republic, the citizenry, regardless of ethnicity and class, work with the government because they know it listens.

Third, internationally, the Philippines is regarded as the United States' errand boy. US foreign policy is criticized even by America's allies. President George W. Bush supports the right-wing Israeli government that plants Jewish settlements on Palestinian lands. He is perceived as seeking control over Iraq and other Arab states because of oil. In response, Muslim freedom fighters plot guerrilla attacks on the vulnerable spots in the American empire. Though our weakness as a state is obvious, our government continues to declare its support for Bush. This makes us a prime target.

The government should offer us a credible strategy for fighting terrorism on the military, political and diplomatic fronts. I remain hopeful that President Macapagal who is intelligent, highly educated and determined, can draw up such a strategy and communicate it to the people in Tagalog and Cebuano.

—FERNANDO NAKPIL-ZIALCITA,
Sociology-Anthropology
Department, Ateneo de Manila
University, Katipunan Avenue,
Quezon City

A contra-reproductive health measure

"BIRTH control." "Reproductive rights." "Women empowerment."

These are just examples of the persuasive phrases employed by the proponents of HB 4110, otherwise known as the Reproductive Health Care Act. But beyond its rich vocabulary, the bill betrays its own spirit.

First, the bill seeks every possible measure to cut down the population explosion of unwanted pregnancies. This includes free access to contraceptives for people between the ages of 13 and 24, with or without parental consent.

As a young adult myself, I never imagined that putting rubbers is a prerogative like wearing Nike. Such a suggestion would just make sex maniacs put their trust in "safe sex," which isn't as effective and safe as "saved sex." Handing out "safe sex" gadgets is like giving "safe needles" to drug dependents in case they cannot anymore control their craving for pleasure. What we need is consistent abstinence. Chastity and condoms make strange bedfellows.

Second, the inclusion of the so-called right to abortion and to contraception among reproductive rights is incongruous. Obviously, the evacuation of wombs and the mutilation of healthy functioning reproductive systems are not "reproductive" but "contra-reproductive." When did *pagpapalaglag* and *pagpapabaog* become synonymous with reproduction?

Third, although the bill recognizes the dilemma of women with unwanted pregnancies, it ignores the side effects that all artificial contraceptives cause them. There is very little difference between contraceptive use and substance abuse. Both admit addictive pleasure and subsequent complications to the user, usually the woman. Before the infamous decision in Griswald vs Connecticut, the use of contraceptives was illegal and justified for medical reasons.

Our lawmakers and family planning officials should learn from the words of Mohandas Gandhi: "Birth control through self-control." If we can patiently teach our citizens to use scientific, natural family planning methods, there's no need to reallocate the budget as proposed in HB 4110, in view of the withdrawal by the USAID of contraceptive freebies. It pays to make reproductive control a purely personal matter.

—NICOLO F. BERNARDO,
Corner Oliva and Ramon Streets,
Fortune Village 4,
Parada, Valenzuela City

Misleading photo

THIS has reference to the caption of a photo inset of soldiers in slippers in Patikul, Sulu that went with the banner story, "AFP ready for more losses." (PDI, 9/9/02) Your caption said: "Army soldiers in slippers patrol the streets of Barangay Danag in Patikul, Sulu."

We find the caption misleading and with malice. Obviously, the soldiers were not patrolling. They were in Barangay Danag to resupply after almost two weeks in the mountains. It is there that they took time to wash their uniforms and clean their boots. They belong to the 4th Infantry Battalion, the unit that clashed with the Abu Sayyaf Group rebel bandits last Sept. 6, where eight of our soldiers were killed in action and 14 others were wounded in action.

The presence of children and people playing basketball shows that the area is not a combat zone. It even showed that the soldiers are part of the community they are protecting.

The photographer, Dennis Sabangan, showed bad faith by projecting that our soldiers are ragtag soldiers and undisciplined. Pictures convey a lot of messages but your caption drew your readers to a wrong perception.

With their hardships and sacrifices, your soldiers are hoping to receive some consideration and fairness in your reporting.

—RHODERICK M. PARAYNO,
major (INF) PA,
command information officer,
Camp Basilio Navarro,
Calarian, Zamboanga City

THE PICTURE speaks for itself. Soldiers assigned in declared "combat zones" such as in Patikul, Sulu, should always be on "patrol mode" whether they are to resupply, wash their uniforms or clean their boots. The enemy usually strikes in most unusual situations even in friendly areas or in the heart of Metro Manila just like when a bomb exploded inside a bus in Balintawak. The photographer is just showing the real atmosphere in Barangay Danag when he clicked his shutter, no malice and no bad faith intended.

—ERNIE SARMIENTO,
PDI chief photographer

The joys of rote learning

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

I'VE written several columns about the importance of developing more critical learning and have warned against approaches that emphasize "mechanical" memory work. But I thought it's time to acknowledge that there is a place, too, for rote learning, and that such learning may, paradoxically, be crucial to critical learning.

Let's look first at examples of skills that we learn through rote. What comes to my mind are the typing classes I had in high school. "I am Mister Manuel Curato," our typing teacher introduced himself, and I have never forgotten. I don't know how many classes he handled through the years, guiding us through long tedious drills to master the quirky "qwerty" keyboard layout. Who can forget those first exercises where we had to type each key five times, the most difficult ones being those handled by the little finger: qqqqq, then wwwww, eeeee, rrrrr. Remember this was before the era of computers so we had to pound away on heavy Olympia manual typewriters.

Rote learning was useful, too, for learning Chinese. Without an alphabet, the only way to remember Chinese words—and there are thousands—was through memory. To pick up writing skills, we had calligraphy exercises, imitating the strokes from style books and repeating each word several times. To speak the language, with its many tones, we had to listen, and listen hard, repeating words so we could pick out its many nuanced meanings by associating sounds with the picture-like words.

People ask if the ethnic Chinese have numbers in their blood. Not quite. It's just that in Chinese schools, you get much more of the drills for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The drills disappeared after calculators came around, with disastrous consequences. Today, parents pay a fortune for Kumon exercises that go back to those old drills, getting students to perform exercises over and over again until the mathematical skills become automatic.

I've realized too how so much of apprenticeship is in a sense a combination of precarious and rote learning, watching and imitating the master. Coordinating speech, hearing, sight, even tactile functions all help to "exercise" the brain, even as it is linked to manual dexterity. For children especially, sharpening this mind-body coordination is crucial for picking up many of life's other skills.

But I've realized, too, rote learning imparts other useful skills for living. A Filipino-American friend tells me how, growing up in a Chinese-American neighborhood, he would find himself without playmates at the end of the day because all the Chinese kids had to get back home for extra lessons—musical instruments, language, whatever. Later, his parents put him on a similar regimen. That extra time, he's realized, paid off later in college and in the workplace in terms of discipline and persistence.

But there's more to life skills than "work." Let me explain with a quick story. The school term when I took typing had been a difficult one in my life. My mother had become critically ill and had to be treated overseas, with her doctors finally deciding to operate. Before my father left to join her, he gave me a Triumph typewriter, knowing that I had started typing classes.

The months my parents were away, I'd pound away each night on the typewriter. The basics—qqqqq, wwwww, eeeee—soon gave way to exercises like "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog" a sentence which got you through the entire alphabet.

My parents still didn't return but "the quick brown fox" sentences yielded now to words of my own choosing. There was magic in seeing sentences appear. Typing was no longer a drill. It was now a gift with which I could use to compose letters to my parents. And yes, I am thankful we didn't have cellphones then—somehow, texting "Luv u" isn't quite the same as typing out, or writing in longhand, a letter.

Looking back now, I can better appreciate the wonders of rote learning. Typing, and other skills we pick up from rote learning, become "mechanical" only in the sense that we don't have to put our minds to the activity itself. Instead, we are free to think, as I did with my letters to my parents and as I do now, for this column, fingers flying and chasing across the keyboard as they try to keep pace with the ideas as they flow from my mind.

Later when I studied biology and evolutionary theory, I learned how the development of the brain and the hands went together. When our ape-like ancestors first got up from all fours to look at the world around them, their hands were freed to do many things: making tools, painting on caves, making more tools to make tools. The more we used our hands, the more "intelligent" human beings became.

Rote learning replicates evolution, allowing us to hone our cognitive skills together with manual dexterity, one sharpening the other. This is best exemplified with the way we learn to play musical instruments. Again, we have the endless drills with scales and arpeggios but as you run through the scales—do, re, mi—you're also learning to associate the notes on the music sheet with each key's tone. It's an amazing symphony of sorts, getting the fingers to synchronize with your sense of hearing and sight. To this day, although I rarely take to the piano, I find myself drumming my fingers up and down imaginary keys whenever I hear a catchy tune.

It's fascinating, too, how as we perform rote activities we sometimes do pause to reflect about what we're doing. Musicians will stop, sometimes exasperated, sometimes jubilant with what they just played. Writers, too, have those interludes. Skills picked up from rote learning actually allow us to be more focused, more contemplative and more critical of the world around us.

* * *

Comments to miguel@pinoykasi.net

Not terror yet

THE OXFORD Dictionary of Current English defines "terror" as extreme fear and "terrorist" as a person using organized violence against a government.

The bombings in Zamboanga City and Metro Manila have not yet caused extreme fear because the people in these places still go about their daily routine.

It is only when they shall have stopped going out of their homes, and government officials can no longer make vital decisions that extreme fear or terror shall have taken place.

Can this scenario ever take place?

—T.B. ABAYAN,
13-A Banning St.,
North Fairview, Quezon City

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Republicans wrest control of US Senate

WASHINGTON—Republicans narrowly seized control of the US Senate on Wednesday, giving President George W. Bush a major political and legislative boost as he starts the final two years of his first term at the White House.

By winning their 50th seat and therefore taking away the Democrats' one-seat majority, the Republicans were ensured control of the 100-member chamber next year because Vice President Dick Cheney will cast tie-breaking votes.

Their team will include at least seven new senators, including two who briefly challenged Bush for their party's presidential nomination in 2000, Tennessee's Lamar Alexander and North Carolina's Elizabeth Dole.

Democrats took just one seat from Republicans when Arkansas Attorney General Mark Pryor, the son of former Sen. David Pryor, defeated incumbent Sen. Tim Hutchinson.

Thirty-four of the 100 Senate seats were up for grabs Tuesday. The new senators will begin their six-year terms in January.

Senate Republicans would command committees and control which bills the chamber would debate to Bush's advantage. His proposals for tax cuts, economic stimulus, defense and domestic spending, national security and judgeship nominations would dominate the chamber's agenda—and put Democrats in a defensive role.

But with at least 47 senators, Democrats still can use filibusters—procedural delays—to kill Republican initiatives because such roadblocks need only 41 votes to succeed.

Democrats seemed to have a slight advantage going into Election Day, holding a 50-49 Senate margin including independent James Jeffords, who abandoned the Republicans in June 2001 and gave the Democrats the one-seat majority. That excluded Dean Barkley, the independent named by Minnesota Gov. Jesse Ventura to replace the late Democratic Sen. Paul Wellstone, who died in a plane crash last month, for a postelection session of Congress that begins next week.

Democrats also had the advantage of having to defend only 14 of the 34 Senate seats in play, compared to 20 seats held by Republicans.

The results strengthen Bush's political hand. He reversed a two-decade trend of the party holding the White House losing Senate seats in mid-term elections, and saw Republican victories in at least five of nine states he visited in the campaign's closing days.

"President Bush and the Republican Party tonight have made history," said White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer.

Sen. Patty Murray, a Democrat who led her party's Senate election drive, said Democrats failed to hone a sharp message on issues like education and jobs.

"The country is still divided, but there were a lot of people on the left who didn't hear what they needed to hear in this election and might have stayed home," she said in an interview. *AP*

AP

VISIT TO MONGOLIA

The Dalai Lama lectures at the Ulan Bator Palace in Mongolia, Nov. 6, during his first visit in seven years to the country, whose people share centuries-old religious and cultural ties with Tibet.

GOP solons extend hold on House

WASHINGTON—Republicans extended their eight-year control of the House of Representatives early Wednesday, turning aside crucial Democratic challenges in region after region and positioning themselves to expand their five-vote majority.

Democratic hopes of regaining a majority ended as Republicans chalked up wins in most of the races earlier seen as toss-ups. Americans voted to fill all 435 House seats, but only a 10th of them were truly competitive. The winners will begin their two-year terms in early January.

Early Wednesday, Republicans had won 223 seats and were leading in four others. If that trend continued, Republicans would hold 227 seats—four more than they do in the current Congress. Majority control requires 218 votes; Republicans currently have 223 seats.

Democrats lost five incumbents. Republicans lost two, and three others were trailing.

If Republicans post net gains, it would be only the third time in a century that the president's party has gained House seats in a midterm election—after Presidents Franklin Roosevelt in 1934 and Bill Clinton in 1998.

Republicans appeared helped by President George W. Bush's popularity, his energetic campaigning and by the relatively low number of competitive races.

"We were all out there a lot, but the president did a great job of going out there and campaigning and he was invaluable in that aspect," said House Speaker Dennis Hastert early Wednesday. He predicted a net Republican gain of two or three seats. *AP*

Jeb Bush wins, but Dems score big in governor races

CHICAGO—US voters reelected a Bush but rejected a Kennedy on Tuesday as 36 states picked governors, with incumbents going down to defeat in South Carolina, Georgia and Wisconsin.

Democrats retained control of California, the most populous state, made inroads in the industrial North and had a good chance to replace Republicans as the majority party in statehouses, winning or leading in 26 states compared with 24 for the Republicans.

The Democratic Governors Association said each party controlled 24 seats after Tuesday's balloting, with Democrats leading in undecided contests in Hawaii and Oregon.

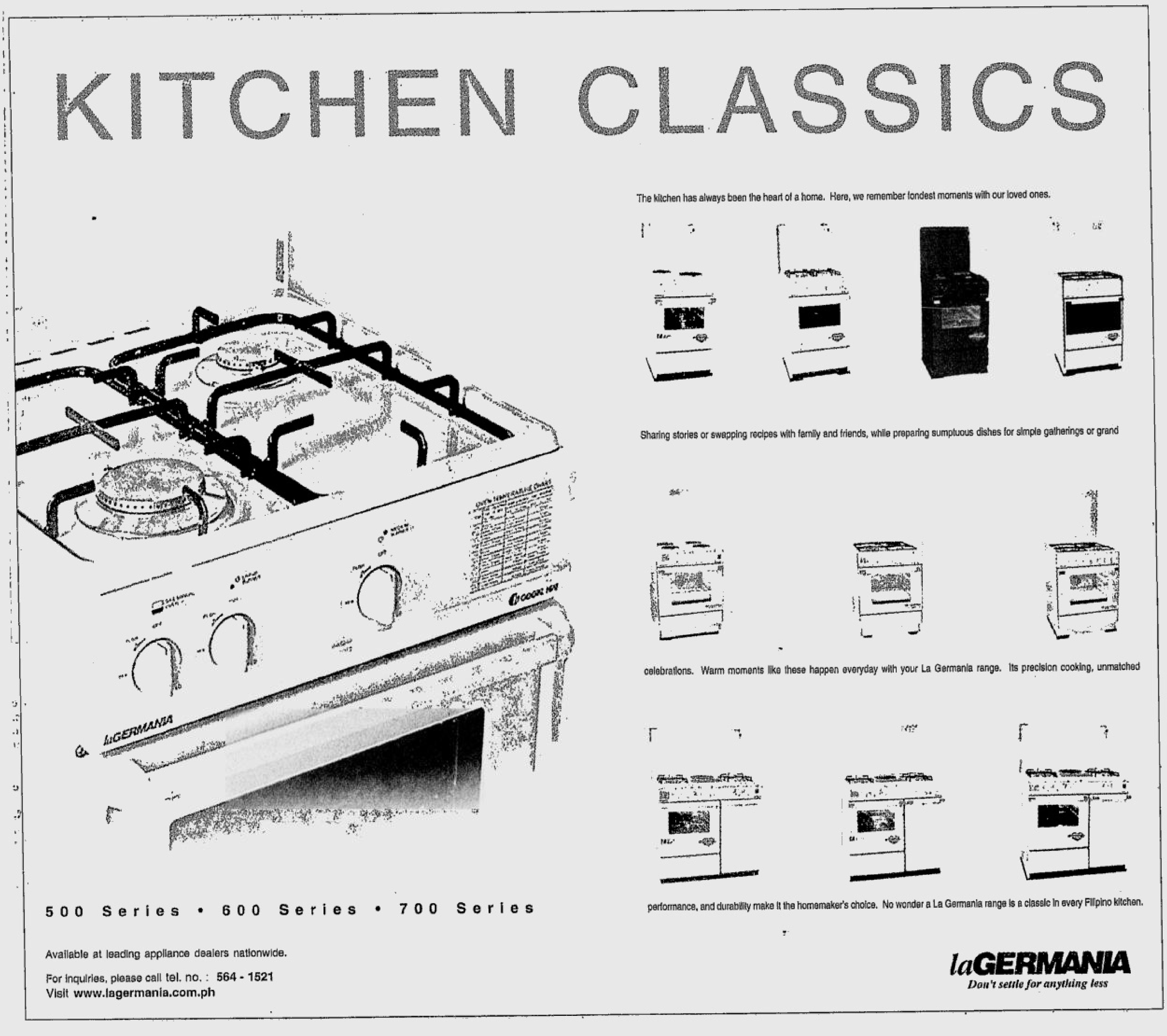
But the Republicans shook up the once solidly Democratic Old South. In South Carolina, Democratic Gov. Jim Hodges lost to Republican Mark Sanford. In Georgia, Sonny Perdue, a former state senator, shocked Gov. Roy Barnes, becoming the state's first Republican governor since 1872.

The two losers were among only five incumbent Democratic governors seeking reelection.

In Wisconsin, Republican Gov. Scott McCallum was topped by Jim Doyle, the state's attorney general, putting a Democrat in the statehouse for the first time in 16 years.

Republicans scored a big win in Florida where President George W. Bush's brother Jeb Bush was easily reelected to a second term over political newcomer Bill McBride. In Maryland, a traditional Democratic stronghold, Democrat Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, daughter of the late Sen. Robert Kennedy, lost to Republican Rep. Robert Ehrlich.

Republicans also maintained their grip on two of the biggest states—New York and Texas—where incumbents George Pataki and Rick Perry, respectively, were returned to office. *Reuters*



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Sharon calls for polls in January

JERUSALEM—Prime Minister Ariel Sharon on Tuesday called early elections for January, blaming the "irresponsible" decision by Labour for the collapse of Israel's national unity government and tapping hardliner Benjamin Netanyahu as his new foreign minister.

"Elections are not what the state needs," said Sharon, but stressed that after Labour's walkout and the "unacceptable" demands of far-right parties to form a new coalition, they were "the least damaging option."

Washington, meanwhile, vowed to continue its Middle East peace efforts despite the political turmoil in Israel. "The United States will continue to pursue this as we can," State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher said.

"We're going to follow through" with efforts to finalize a road map for the creation of a Palestinian state in three years, he said. "Those goals remain important," Bucher said, while stressing the need for Palestinian reforms.

Sharon's rival for the Likud party leadership, former premier Netanyahu, accepted the prime minister's offer to be foreign minister in the caretaker government ahead of the elections to be held on Jan. 28.

And Labour leader Binyamin Bin Eliezer said his party would focus on social issues in the election campaign.

Sharon accused Labour of putting "irresponsible political reasons" ahead of national interest by quitting in a row over funding of Jewish settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories.

"We are facing difficult challenges today, perhaps more complex than we have ever faced," said the hardliner, whose 20-month national unity coalition collapsed on October 30.

"I will not deviate from the national responsibility," said Sharon, who has refused to talk peace with the Palestinians until all violence ceases.

But Ben Eliezer, whose resignation as defence minister sparked the political crisis, slammed Sharon's failure to tackle social issues as the country wallows in its worst-ever economic crisis, with one in five Israelis living in poverty.

"Two years of nothing—no political, social or economic achievements. Never has a prime minister enjoyed the support of so many, and done so little," Ben Eliezer told reporters.

In a hard-hitting speech, Sharon said he would not bow to "political blackmail" from any party or person, after also slamming the ultra-nationalist National Union bloc for refusing to shore up his narrowed-down coalition.

Netanyahu, who has made no secret of his ambition to run against Sharon in Likud party primaries, said Likud would win a sweeping victory after the leadership run-off is held.

"I am convinced that the crushing majority coalition that the Likud will set up can put us on the right path to bring the country solutions over the next four years," Netanyahu said.

Sharon, a former general and proponent of the controversial Jewish settlements in land seized in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war, was elected on a security ticket in February 2001 and took office a month later. *AFP*

AFP

DOES IT BITE TOO?
Japan's electronics giant Sanyo Electric employee Maki Yamauchi controls the guard dog robot "Banryu" which means guard-dragon in Japanese, with her mobile phone in Tokyo Nov. 6. The Banryu can move 15 meters per minute, transmit video images to owner's mobile phone, detect a fire with newly developed odor-sensor and also bark at dubious people.

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WORLDBRIEFS

Third resolution on Iraq

UNITED NATIONS—The United States will try for a third time on Wednesday to get the UN Security Council behind a resolution to force Iraq to disarm, diplomats said. France, which had led the resistance to US proposals, was believed to have agreed to a key provision in the text, which was described by diplomats as "creative ambiguity" aimed at winning approval. "The Security Council will hold consultations . . . at 10:30 tomorrow morning on Iraq," China's deputy ambassador, Zhang Yishan, announced on Tuesday. The Bush administration hopes for a vote by Friday in the 15-member Security Council on the resolution, the third version circulated since early October. The new document states that Iraq is in material breach of its obligations, provides a tough inspection regime and threatens "serious consequences" for non-compliance, a US official said. But the official did not reveal the compromise wording Washington had promised. Washington had proposed a resolution stating if Iraq did not fully declare its weapons of mass destruction or interfered in arms inspections, this could amount to a "material breach" of the 1991 Gulf War ceasefire pact—a legal basis for war. *Reuters*

Train fire in France

NANCY, France—A train heading for Austria caught fire in eastern France, killing 12 people, most by smoke inhalation, officials said Wednesday. Nine people were injured. The fire broke out as the overnight train was leaving the eastern city of Nancy, officials in the Meurthe-et-Moselle region said. The train had been heading from Paris to Vienna via Strasbourg, near the border with Germany. Authorities were initially attributing the cause to an electrical problem, possibly in the heating system. Those killed were six men, five women and one child, authorities said. Their nationality was not immediately known. *AP*

US closes Yemen embassy

WASHINGTON—The United States said Tuesday it was closing its embassy in Yemen to the public indefinitely amid fears it may become a target for a terrorist attack in retaliation for the US killing of a top al-Qaida operative. "The US Embassy in Sanaa will be closed to the public on Nov. 6 to review its security posture," said Lynn Cassell, a State Department spokesperson. "The embassy will re-open at the appropriate time," she said, declining to say when that might be. The decision to close the embassy to the public came as US Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz implicitly confirmed the United States carried out a missile strike in Yemen that killed a top al-Qaida leader and five other al-Qaida suspects. *AFP*

No pullout from Chechnya

MOSCOW—Russian forces will not withdraw from Chechnya until rebel leaders and their accomplices have been "eliminated," Defense Minister Sergei Ivanov has vowed. "I consider it inappropriate to begin withdrawing troops from Chechnya while the chiefs of the rebel armies and their accomplices have not yet been eliminated," the defense minister told a press conference in the far eastern town of Vladivostock, Interfax reported Wednesday. On Sunday, Ivanov suspended a plan to reduce the number of Russian troops in the breakaway province of Chechnya and announced the start of a large-scale operation against the rebels following a mass hostage-taking in a Moscow theatre while left 120 hostages and 41 assailants dead. Russian President Vladimir Putin said on Tuesday he would not order any large-scale "anti-terrorist" assaults in Chechnya in the wake of last month's hostage siege in Moscow. *AFP*

Iraq oil smuggling checked

UNITED NATIONS—The US Navy, with help from Iran and an allied force, has reduced Iraq's oil smuggling by sea this year by boarding twice as many Iraqi ships in the Gulf, a US Navy official told a UN panel on Tuesday. Iraq's oil exports have been managed by the United Nations since 1997 in the humanitarian oil-for-food program. But oil smugglers illegally sneak crude out of Iraq by sea as well as by truck to Turkey and Jordan and through a pipeline to Syria. For 11 years an allied embargo of ships has been intercepting ships suspected of smuggling Iraqi oil. Now US, Australian, British and Polish vessels ply the waters as close as 10 miles from Iraq's coasts, and those vessels have been intercepting ships with growing success, said Vice Adm. Timothy Keating, who oversees the embargo as commander of the US Navy's Fifth Fleet. *Reuters*

UK adoption law

LONDON—Britain is to allow unmarried couples, including gays, to adopt children after the upper house of parliament backed a controversial bill on Tuesday, dealing a new blow to the embattled leader of the opposition Conservatives. Tory leader Iain Duncan Smith and campaigners for traditional family values had spoken out against the reform of the adoption laws. The surprise vote in the House of Lords prompted fresh concern among Tories over Duncan Smith's leadership and exposed the in-fighting dogging the party, which is badly behind Prime Minister Tony Blair's Labour Party in the polls. *AFP*

Vatican may bar homosexuals from priesthood

VATICAN CITY—The Vatican said it is drafting new guidelines for accepting candidates for the priesthood that will address the question of whether gays should be barred.

The brief statement Tuesday by the Vatican's Press Office gave no indication what the conclusion may be despite news reports that the document will include directives against the admission of homosexuals.

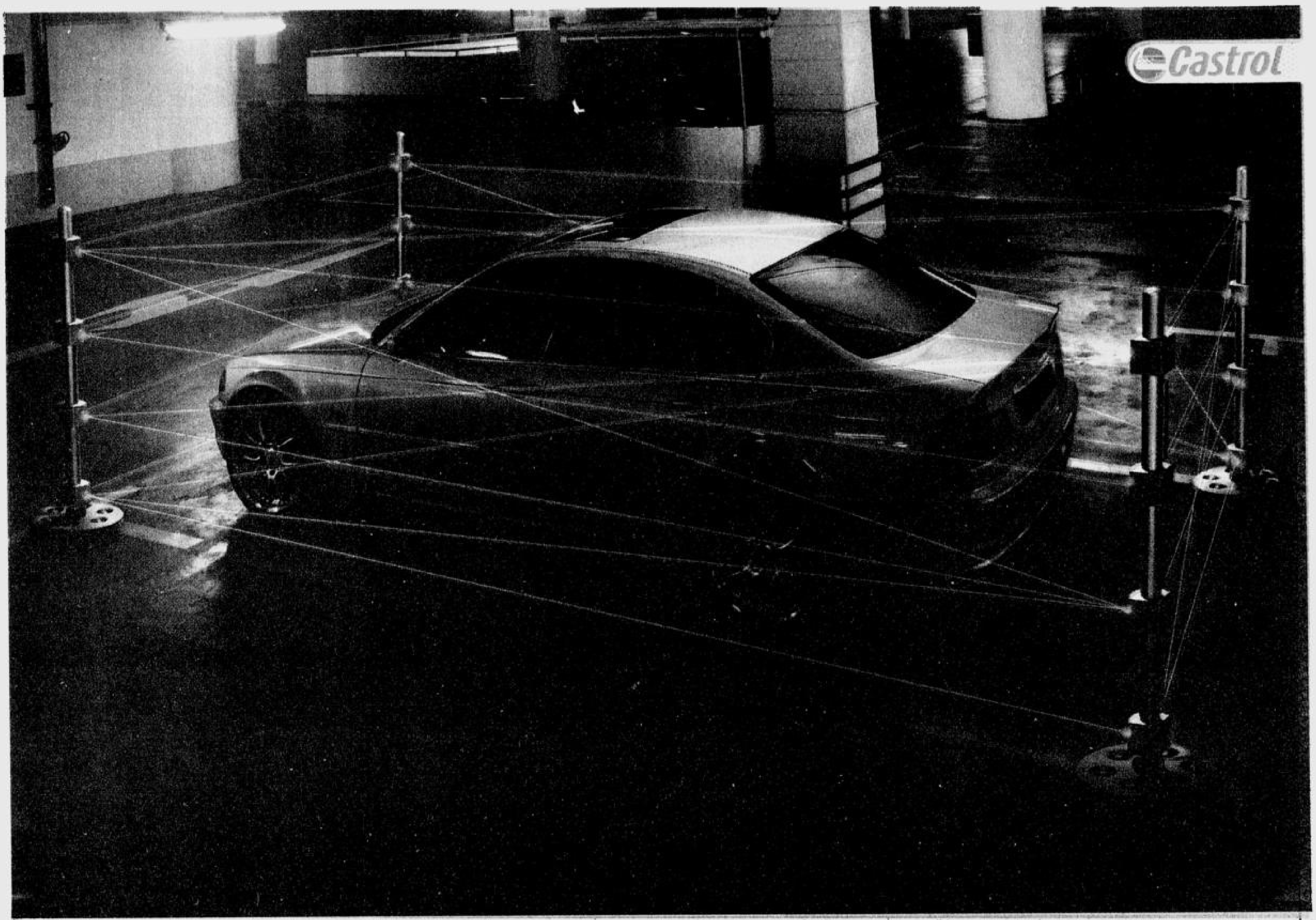
Vatican congregations have been studying the issue for several years, but the question has received renewed attention given the clerical sex abuse scandal in the United States.

Most of the victims of molestation by priests have been adolescent boys. Experts on sex offenders say there is no credible evidence that homosexuals are more likely than heterosexuals to abuse children, but several church leaders have argued that gay clergy are to blame for the scandal.

That suggestion was criticized by Charlie Spiegel, executive director of Our Family Coalition, a gay rights group in San Francisco.

"Policies like this have been shown to produce hate and violence, not the religious values of love and understanding," Spiegel said Tuesday.

The Vatican Press Office said the Congregation for Catholic Education has begun drafting the document, but no publication date has been set. It will not be published at least until next year, the office said. *AP*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Across the NATION

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph
Assistant Editor **Tony Bergonia**

VISAYAS BUREAU
c/o Cebu Daily News
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C. Luzon firecracker makers watched

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Police officials in Bulacan and Bataan were ordered to prevent the pilferage of substances and devices used in the manufacture of pyrotechnic products to ensure that these do not land in the hands of terrorist or criminal groups.

Chief Supt. Oscar Calderon, Central Luzon police director, issued the directive on Monday as the region's industry went full-blast in the manufacture and sales of these items for the Christmas and New Year holidays.

It is during the last two months of the year when stocks of gunpowder and blasting supplies are plenty, according to Calderon.

Two laws and several executive orders require import permits for these materials. Local procurement is, however, loosely regulated.

Although he clarified that terrorist cells were not present or operating in Central Luzon, Calderon said law enforcers were taking "pre-emptive measures" on security threats.

This latest security measure, he added, is being coordinated with the chapter of the Philippine Pyrotechnics Manufacturers and Dealers Association (PPMDA) in Bulacan.

Of PPMDA's 314 members as of 1995, 244 are based in Bulacan, according to the Philippine National Police's Firearms and Explosives Division.

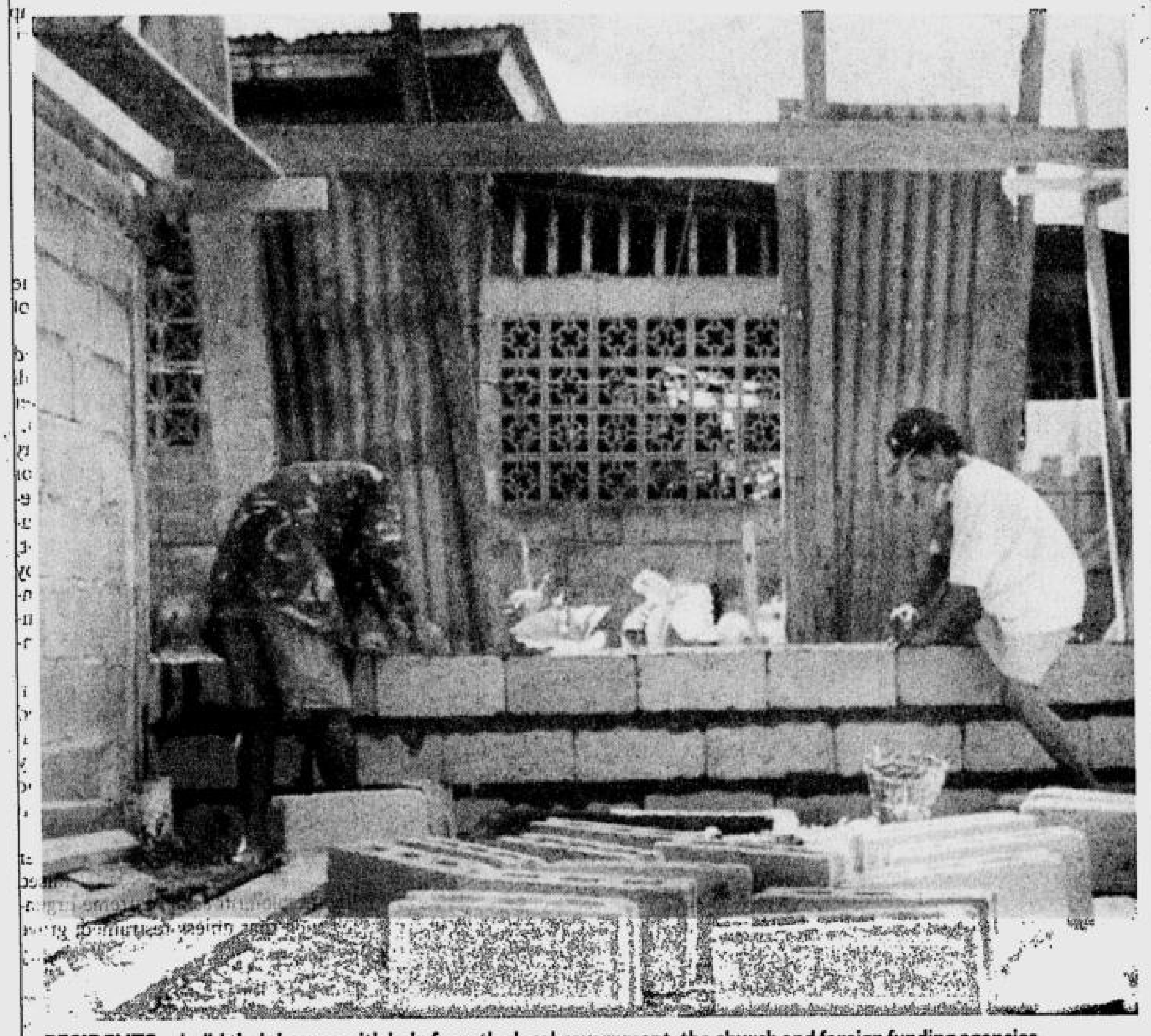
Companies in Limay, Bataan, that produce explosives for the country's mining sector are also under keen watch although reports said they have good handling, security and accounting of their materials.

Calderon said the directive includes regulating sales and distribution in order to protect public safety.

In Bulacan alone, police authorities said the cost of damages due to firecracker and pyrotechnics explosions reached about P13 million from 1990 to 1995 and figures during the last five years had increased by about 50 percent.

PNP files in Bulacan also showed that in 25 incidents from 1990 to 1995, 24 persons had died while 38 others were injured.

There were no consolidated figures of dead or injured persons in the last five years but the New Year's revelry last January in Central Luzon indicated that two died while 73 suffered serious injuries from firecracker blasts.



RESIDENTS rebuild their houses with help from the local government, the church and foreign funding agencies.
RYAN LIM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

Camiguin flash flood survivors struggle one year after tragedy

By Grace Cantal-Albasin
PDI Mindanao Bureau

MAHINOG, Camiguin—A year ago today, 197 residents and hundreds of farm animals were killed when mud and boulders buried Sitio Zamora in Barangay Hubangon here last year.

A total of 136 bloated bodies were dug in hip-deep mud while 57 others were declared dead when rescue teams failed to find those who were reported missing after three weeks of searching.

As days went by, the stench of dead people and animals and eerie silence filled the air in Barangay Hubangon. It was the exact opposite of its glorious days.

Hubangon was known as the greenest, liveliest and most progressive barangay in Camiguin. It was a "Hall of Famer" in the barangay competitions in the island.

The flashflood was something one would not wish to happen, not even to a mortal enemy.

But now, some survivors would prefer to have been among those killed.

Life is terribly miserable for those who survived after their farms were buried in mud and boulders.

Residents relied heavily on their vegetable gardens, coconut farms and rice fields. With no farms to till, some survivors were forced to leave the island to find work in nearby towns and cities.

Danger

Most of the children now work as househelp, sending part of their meager income to their parents who could hardly feed those who were left behind.

Isidro Bernardez, father of eight, said work seems difficult to come by.

"I can take whatever work there is. It's even harder now," Bernardez said as he recalled being able to eat "three times a day" before the tragedy.

The provincial government of Camiguin distributed farm equipment like shovel, pick and sickle to the barangay chair to ensure that residents would not sell these.

Even with these farm equipment, residents have been warned not to return to Sitio Zamora as it still poses danger of another flash flood with boulders and fallen coconut trees sprawled all over the place.

On rainy days, residents run to the Virgen de Los Remedios Church or seek shelter in houses along the highway.

"It is better that we stay here (Sitio Zamora). We are just extra careful that when it rains we go down to safer grounds," Bonifacio Balabat said.

Only about six families returned to the site where most of the residents died. This was because they could not find a new place to live in.

"Maybe it is better for those who died. At least they are now in peace. For us who survived, it is really hard," Margarita Dulhao said.

Gov. Pedro Romualdo told the INQUIRER that the provincial government has pledged to provide materials for the construction of 300, 13-by-17-sqm houses.

"The province can only provide houses but sans partitions because it is what we can afford," Romualdo said.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources had also donated *lawaan* logs, he said.

A group from the Japan International Cooperating Agency (JICA) would visit the area to see the damage and hopefully approve a P40-million river-control project, the governor added.

But only a few received these housing materials given away since February. Some residents complained that "only those close to their (government's) hearts have availed of financial and material assistance."

Housing assistance

Still, they thanked the Catholic Church for the housing assistance.

Fr. Benecio Andohon, parish priest of Mahinog, told the INQUIRER that governance in the island is "too traditional" that it is affecting the future of the victims.

Andohon said during the barangay elections that Romualdo had asked him to help his barangay chair bet win.

The priest said he tried to urge the people to vote for the governor's candidate so that the victims would have easy access to government's assistance.

Months after the barangay elections and the victory of the governor's bet, Andohon said the promise of better life remained just a promise.

"I truly pity the people and abhor the governance of this island. The church has to move so that it could not be branded a remiss on its duty to the people," Anduhon said.

The National Secretariat Social Action of Caritas in Manila has donated kitchenware, mats, blankets, mosquito nets and other basic needs. It is also financing the 50 houses for the victims who could not start rebuilding their houses. The housing project amounts to about P2.5 million and its beneficiaries are those who were not in the government's list.

"These are people not listed because of their political affiliation," Anduhon said.

Jobs

The Catholic Church acquired about a hectare of land for the housing project. The beneficiaries would be given livelihood projects for them to earn a living and pay for the house at a price they can afford.

Andohon said they were forced to cut some old coconut trees for the victims' use.

"The church is doing what it can for the victims, to fill the void of the government's negligence especially that it had not even moved a single rock in the area," Andohon said.

The church even started the cleanup in December.

But Romualdo said many people have become moneyed because of the tragedy and the victims who received cash donations have gone drinking in the market.

Andohon, on the other hand, said the tragedy strengthened the people's faith. He said more people go to church to hear mass after the incident.

As survivors today commemorate the tragedy that struck this village, residents will inaugurate a chapel where the rampaging flood once swept houses and killed people.

In that chapel stands a cross bearing all the names of those who died.

5 dead in vehicle collision in Negros

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Five persons were killed and 14 others were injured when the trailer loaded with a sugar-cane rammed into a passenger jeepney Along VMC Road, Victorias City, Negros Occidental at 5 p.m. Tuesday.

The 10-wheeler Prime Mover truck loaded with sugarcane was entering the road toward the Victorias Milling Company (VMC) when its trailer got disconnected and hit a passenger jeepney heading for the city's Canetown Subdivision.

The jeepney and its passengers were covered by about 20 tons of sugarcane. Rescuers had to dig them out from beneath the cane. The jeepney was a total wreck.

Killed were Regino Mondejar Apostol, 59, a science teacher of the Victorias National High School; Leah Escabilla, 27, of Hacienda Paquita, Barangay 20, Victorias; Joefralyn Sta. Ana, 13, and Gigi Gedayawan, 13, both of Cabahug Street, Cadiz City; and a still unidentified woman, according to Senior Supt. Vicente Ponteras, Negros Occidental police director.

The unidentified woman described to be about 40 years old was crushed and mutilated. Parts of her body had to be gathered up and very little was left of her head, radio reports said.

Apostol, Sta. Ana and Gedayawan were declared dead on arrival at the nearby VMC clinic and were later brought to the Victorias and Canlas Funeral Homes.

The fatalities were described to have severe wounds on various parts of their bodies and are believed to have died from internal hemorrhage.

Fernando Britania, the jeepney driver, and the driver of the Prime Mover were detained at the Victorias police jail, Ponteras said.

Most of the injured persons were rushed at the Riverside Medical Center (RMC) in Bacolod City, 34 kilometers north of Victorias City. Two were in critical condition as both sustained chest injuries. They were Roblindo Custodio, 15, of Sagay City; and Estrellita Brillantes, 60, of Barrio Palma, Victorias City.

The injured now recuperating at the RMC said they could hardly believe they survived the tragedy from the way their wrecked vehicle looked after the collision.

Geneva Laguda said she hugged tightly her 7-and-a-half-year-old nephew Nicol John America, when the trailer hit their jeepney.

Laguda, 45, of Salvacion Village, Barangay 6, sustained a head wound. The boy was also treated for minor injuries at the RMC.

She said she was fortunate that she was not able to sit at her favorite seat on the left side of the jeep because that was where the five persons who were killed had been seated.

She said there were 24 of them in the jeepney, including the driver.

Romel Aragona, 34, of Canetown Subd., said he covered his head after he felt an impact on his back. He later discovered that the five persons seated beside him were all dead.

Laguda and Aragona said their vehicle was running slowly when it was hit by the trailer. After the impact they felt the vehicle being dragged into the other side of the street. Only the cemented portion of the street prevented the jeepney from turning turtle, they said.

The other injured treated at the RMC were Renan Cesar Adelantar, 20; Renalie Baco, 26; Rex Antonil, 9; Regina Digmanoy, 16; Celez Ziang, 32; Rona Dimaicos, 39; Mary Joy Pareja, 17; and Helen Barbas. All are residents of Victorias City.

Pagadian City radiomen arrested in drug raid

PAGADIAN CITY—Two local broadcast journalists, one of whom is an officer of the Zamboanga del Sur police press corps, were arrested by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation for their alleged involvement in the illegal drugs trade here.

Herohito Cadion, a reporter of RPN-9's dxKP AM and Rey Lobo, anchorperson of the Muslim-run dxID AM, along with three others, were arrested during a raid along R.T. Lim Street here on Tuesday noon.

Cadion is the president of the PNP press corps and former president of the Media Club of Pagadian City. He covers the provincial police command based in Camp Abelon.

Lobo anchors Iwag sa Dakbayan, a news and public affairs program aired over dxID, which is owned by the Association of Islamic Development (AID), in Banale District here.

Lawyer Friolo Icao Jr., NBI district chief, identified the other suspects as Cadion's younger brother, Homobono, 32; Alfonso Macaso, 32, of Tuburan District and Lobo's half-brother, Ariel, 23.

Icao said Cadion maintains a drug den adjacent to his residence along R.T. Lim Street here. He said Cadion's alleged drug den had been operating since last year, with Lobo and the three other suspects as errand boys.

Recovered during the raid were undetermined amount of crystal-like substance believed to be shabu, drug paraphernalia, several white-colored tablets, which appears to be Ecstasy, a home-made .38-cal. revolver, P6,140 in cash and the P200 marked money used by the NBI.

Icao said the newsmen did not refuse when arrested but denied they were into the drugs trade. But he said the NBI was positive of the duo's activities.

Icao said NBI agents "had been casing Cadion's residence for almost three months (already) after receiving information they were selling to students."

Willy Sacdalan, dxKP's news director, said the management was embarrassed with the arrest of one of its reporters. "Most likely, he (Cadion) will be dismissed from the service," Sacdalan said.

Philip James Tremedal, news director of RMN-dxPR, said Cadion and Lobo have put the media profession in a bad light.

Aside from the arrested newsmen, Icao said two other journalists have been involved in the drugs trade.

He declined to name the two other suspects but hinted they also belong to the broadcast industry. ***Hernan de la Cruz, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Fish kill hits Dagupan City

DAGUPAN CITY—The overcast skies and the changes in temperature have killed P1.8 million worth of cultured *bangus* (milkfish) in three villages here this week, according to Dominador Mara, city agriculture officer.

Mara said 24 fish pen operators maintaining 44 pens in Barangays Salapingao, Pugaro and Lomboy were affected by the fish kill.

Mara said the cloudy weather could have caused the sudden death of the *bangus* stocks.

"There was not enough dissolved oxygen in the rivers because the sun was not shining," he said.

The operators immediately sold the *bangus* affected by the fish kill for P25-P30 a kilogram, or half of its regular price.

Mara said there were sporadic fish kill incidents in other parts of the city but fish pen operators no longer report these to his office.

Mayor Benjamin Lim earlier ordered the demolition of about 800 fish pens in the city's rivers.

Lim said the city's major rivers have been cleared of the fishery structures and they would demolish 200 more pens. ***Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau***

ROUNDUP

Quake jolts N. Luzon

BAGUIO CITY —A mild earthquake shook some areas of Northern Luzon on Tuesday night. Reports from the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said the 3.9-magnitude tremor's epicenter was located 18 km northeast of La Trinidad, Benguet. The quake was felt at Intensity 1 in this city and Intensity 3 in La Union. No damage was reported in the quake, which struck at 7:45 p.m. Tuesday. *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Tight security at Luisita

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Security remained tight at the Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac City after a fire, believed started by two men, razed at least a hectare of sugarcane there on Sunday. Radio reports here said policemen, the plantation's security guards and firemen kept watch to prevent a similar incident at the vast Cojuangco-owned property. Police arrested the suspects, George Manguil and Edge Valerio, after the incident. The report did not say what the motives of the two men were in burning the sugarcane patch in Barangay Central. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Caller ID scheme

BAGUIO CITY—A councilor here called on the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. to adopt a caller identification scheme to deter pranksters from making bomb threats. Richard Cariño said the anonymity provided by telephone calls has emboldened people to make such calls. He said the four bomb threats in the city since Oct. 18 had been made through telephone calls. Police, however, said these calls were made by pranksters. Cariño said requests for a caller ID feature made by the city government to the Pilipino Telephone Corp., the city's former telephone service provider, were not acted upon. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Ex cop nabbed

CAMP DANGWA, Benguet—Police arrested a former police captain, who is facing murder charges in Kalinga, after more than four years of hiding. Reports said former Senior Insp. Marner Dasayon, 41, of Pinukpuk, Kalinga, was arrested in Tabuk town on Wednesday last week. Dasayon, former police chief of Kabugao, Apayao, was charged with the July 1998 murder of Fernando Sibay, an inmate at the Kabugao municipal jail. Police records said a drunk Dasayon asked a jail employee to bring Sibay to him because he would need him in a target practice. Dasayon ordered that a cup, which he would later shoot, be placed on Sibay's shoulder. Dasayon missed the cup and instead hit Sibay's neck. *PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Clean Air Act pushed

DAVAO CITY—The Mindanao Business Council (MBC) has pushed for the speedy implementation of the Clean Air Act of 1999 in support of the anti-pollution initiatives of the Asian Development Bank. MBC chair Joji Bian said unless the Act is immediately implemented, Mindanao will soon find itself confronting pollution problems as more industries shift their sights on the island. She said the pollution problem being faced by Metro Manila local governments could have been averted if only Congress passed anti-pollution measures decades ago. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Helpless over taxis

DAVAO CITY—The Land Transportation Office and the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board have admitted that they were helpless in running after overcharging taxis and vans plying the Davao International Airport to the downtown areas. LTO regional director Felix Magalona said his office had yet to receive a formal complaint from supposed victim-passengers so his office can take action. LTFRB action officer Edgar Violan said at least 24 vans are authorized by the Davao Integrated Transport Cooperative to carry passengers from the airport, but that he was not aware that the van drivers collect more than P300 as fare from the airport to anywhere downtown. *Anthony Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Cavite goes organic

BACOOR, Cavite—The newly constructed Bacoor Material Recovery Facility and Composting Plant, costing about P15 million, has started recycling garbage and other waste materials here. Mayor Jesse Castillo said the plant produces at least five tons of organic fertilizer a day. "The P15-million composting plant project is enough to solve the garbage problem and maintain the town's cleanliness, which could encourage foreign investors to come in and invest their resources in the town," Castillo said. The fertilizer is sold in the local market, and exported to some neighboring countries. *Fausto Tatad Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Town mayor castigated

SILANG, Cavite—The town government here is looking for an alternative solution to its garbage and waste disposal problem after town mayor Ruben Maglangsakay was castigated by Environment and Natural Resources Secretary Heherson Alvarez for failure to have its own dump as mandated by the DENR. Alvarez had given Maglangsakay five days starting last Wednesday to explain why the municipal government failed to do so. Maglangsakay said the garbage collected in the town has been temporarily dumped in the nearby town due to lack of funds. Sources said a huge volume of uncollected garbage is burned along the street corners. *Fausto Tatad Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

New school IDs

TABACO CITY—Dancing to the popular tune of the national identification system, the local government here passed an ordinance that mandates all schools, colleges and universities here to issue new identification card to their students. Councilor Raul Borejon authored the resolution that aims to determine minors easily. The new identification cards would not only contain the name, address and photo of the holder but would also contain the person's birth date and age. The passage of the ordinance on the new school ID system was in response to the increasing clamor of both public and private sectors to regulate business establishments from allowing minors, especially students. The ordinance also draws support from parents, saying it would minimize cutting of classes among students. *Job Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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6 Army soldiers charged with murder

By J. Bulambot and J. Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Six soldiers of the 78th Infantry Battalion based in northern Cebu are in more trouble.

On Monday, murder charges were filed against Lt. Col. Jonas Sumagaysay, 78th IB commander, and his four soldiers for the killing of Agustin Abile on Oct. 20.

Abile, who was mentally ill, suffered 15 bullet wounds after he allegedly tried to grab an Armalite from a soldier in military detachment based in Tabuelan town.

On Sunday, a soldier was wounded after he was shot by his fellow soldier inside the 78th IB camp in Barangay Cabalawan, Sogod town, about 60 kilometers north of Cebu City.

Former Sogod Vice Mayor Dean Severo Dosado claimed both soldiers were drunk and had a heated argument last Sunday afternoon when the incident happened.

Sumagaysay, however, said Sgt. Nicomedes Atienza was cleaning his firearm when it accidentally went off, hitting Pfc. Ronald Nasayre in the right leg.

The murder complaint against Sumagaysay and four others were filed by spouses Manuel and Jovita Abile before the Cebu Provincial Prosecutor's Office.

Also charged were Major Acilo Medija, Staff Sgt. Elmer Taneca, Private First Class Proline Garan and Private Teody Layo.

In their complaint, the couple said the soldiers should be held liable for the death of their son who was mistaken as a communist rebel.

Jovita denied the allegation of the military that Agustin's bag contained a gun and a tent that led them to believe that he was a member of the New People's Army.

She said she had brought her son's bag to their house in Balamban town because he had to meet with his friend in Barangay Bogo, Asturias.

But Sumagaysay maintained that his men only acted in self-defense after Agustin tried to grab Taneca's firearm in front of their military detachment in Tabuelan.

He said Taneca saw Agustin standing near the detachment. When asked what he was doing, Agustin reportedly told the soldier that he was a missionary conducting a lecture to students in the area.

When Taneca asked Agustin about the content of his bag, he allegedly tried to grab Taneca's M14 rifle. The two grappled for the gun. Agustin allegedly fired the gun, prompting Garan and Layo to shoot the victim 15 times.

But the victim's parents said their son was not a rebel, adding that he had been in trouble several times because of his mental illness.

On Sunday's incident, Dosado said in a radio interview that Sogod Councilor Romulo Estenzo was informed by his friends that soldiers were drunk when the shooting occurred.

Although Estenzo did not personally witness the incident, Dosado said people living near in the detachment attested that what happened was not an accident.

The residents, he added, got scared because they thought rebels had attacked the detachment after they heard several bursts of gunfire.

Dosado said the soldiers were probably having a drinking session at the store near the detachment.

But Sumagaysay said Atienza was cleaning his M16 rifle when he accidentally squeezed the trigger and hit Nasayre.

Atienza has been placed under camp restriction pending result of an investigation.

CHR urged to probe death of 4 soldiers

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—The Philippine Army has asked the Commission on Human Rights here to look into the brutal slaying of four members of the Scout Rangers by armed men believed to be members of the New People's Army (NPA) in September.

Lt. Col. George Rabusa, Army's 43rd Infantry Battalion commander, requested an investigation through a letter addressed to Paquito Nacino, CHR director for Eastern Visayas.

In his letter, Rabusa said rebel leader Glicerio Roluna alias JR of the NPA's Evelyn Dublin Command and four unidentified rebels were behind the ambush-slay of the soldiers.

Four members of the Scout Ranger were killed at about 3:30 p.m. of Sept. 20 when some 30 armed men ambushed a military jeep while negotiating a curve at Barangay Mahayahay, Mahaplag town, Leyte.

Killed were Master Sgt. Alex Ajenga, T/Sgt. Jose Neil Srilo, Pfc. Gomer Lyndon Norio and Pfc. Dario Ramos.

Capt. Noel Delorio, 43rd IB spokesperson, said that to make sure nobody would survive, the victims were shot individually at close range as indicated on the bullet wounds on their foreheads.

He said the victims were then robbed of their personal belongings and valuables aside from their firearms, ammunitions.

Court orders temporary closure radio, TV stations in Lucena City

LUCENA CITY—Radio listeners here woke up yesterday morning missing the spew of scathing tirades in a program of a local radio station and its sister television station when the regional trial court ordered the stations' temporary shutdown.

Regional Trial Court Executive Judge Virgilio Alpajora issued a temporary restraining order for 72 hours effective Tuesday on Katigbak Enterprises Inc. doing business as ConAmor Broadcasting System, resulting from a charge of non-compliance of local permits and licenses filed by the Lucena City government.

ConAmor operates dwTI-AM, dwKI-FM and Channel 8, the first local television station in Southern Tagalog. Its main studio is located at Barangay Ibabang Dupay, in the outskirts of the city.

One of its morning fares is the 30-minute "Nosi Balasi" program anchored by Polly Pobeda and James Magbuhos, which regularly dishes out scathing blind items that obviously pertain to Lucena City Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr.

The city government charged that the company failed to get this year's business and mayor's permits for its operations despite several notices from the concerned government agencies.

On Oct. 4, the city government enforced the closure order issued by Talaga.

However, after the enforcing agencies left the company premises, "the defendant, in utter disregard of the authority of the city government, defies the closure and proceeded to operate and conduct its activity without the necessary permits from the city government," said assistant city lawyer Marvin Tan in his petition.

Through its broadcasters in the succeeding days after the failed closure, the company cried political harassment and assault of press freedom as reasons for its defiance.

"This is not a case of political harassment nor assault of press freedom. This is plain and simple enforcement of what the law dictates. As a responsible media entity, it should be the one to set a good example to the public," Talaga told newsmen.

Last week, ConAmor filed charges of abuse of authority against Talaga and members of the closure enforcement team before the Sandiganbayan.

Talaga and Joselito Ojeda, ConAmor president, used to be the best of political allies since both of them belonged to the Lakas party.

ConAmor is known to have played an important role in Talaga's recall election victory last year over former Lucena City Mayor Bernard Tagarao.

Lawyer Marvin Tan, assistant city legal officer, said in the petition for injunction, "the act of defiance by defendant unduly undermines the authority of the city government, through continuous broadcasting, by mocking and putting the city government into public ridicule and contempt, particularly in its effort to enforce existing regulatory laws."

But he stressed that the filing is "in exercise of the police power granted to the city government by the Local Government Code and not in anyway intended to deal or interfere with the power vested by law to the National Telecommunication Commission."

Alpajora, pointed out in his order that the court finds the matter raised by the plaintiff as of "extreme urgency such that unless restrained, grave injustice and irreparable injury would be suffered by the plaintiff."

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Ojeda yesterday. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Baguio remains top tourist spot despite bomb threats

BAGUIO CITY—Despite bomb threats in various parts of the country, this mountain resort city still attracted domestic tourists during the four-day All Saints' Day holiday. Purificacion Molintas, regional director of the Department of Tourism, said hotels and inns registered a 90-percent occupancy last week.

Molintas said Baguio remains safe for tourists and its residents despite a police report classifying the city as a possible target of terrorists for being highly urbanized and a popular tourist destination where many people converge.

The report, which was presented by the Cordillera police during the Cabinet oversight committee-internal security's (COC-IS) special executive committee meeting on Oct. 21, said the city experienced four bomb threats this year and this required "immediate attention."

"Baguio is still safe. We are trying everything to make tourists feel secure in our city," Molintas told the INQUIRER.

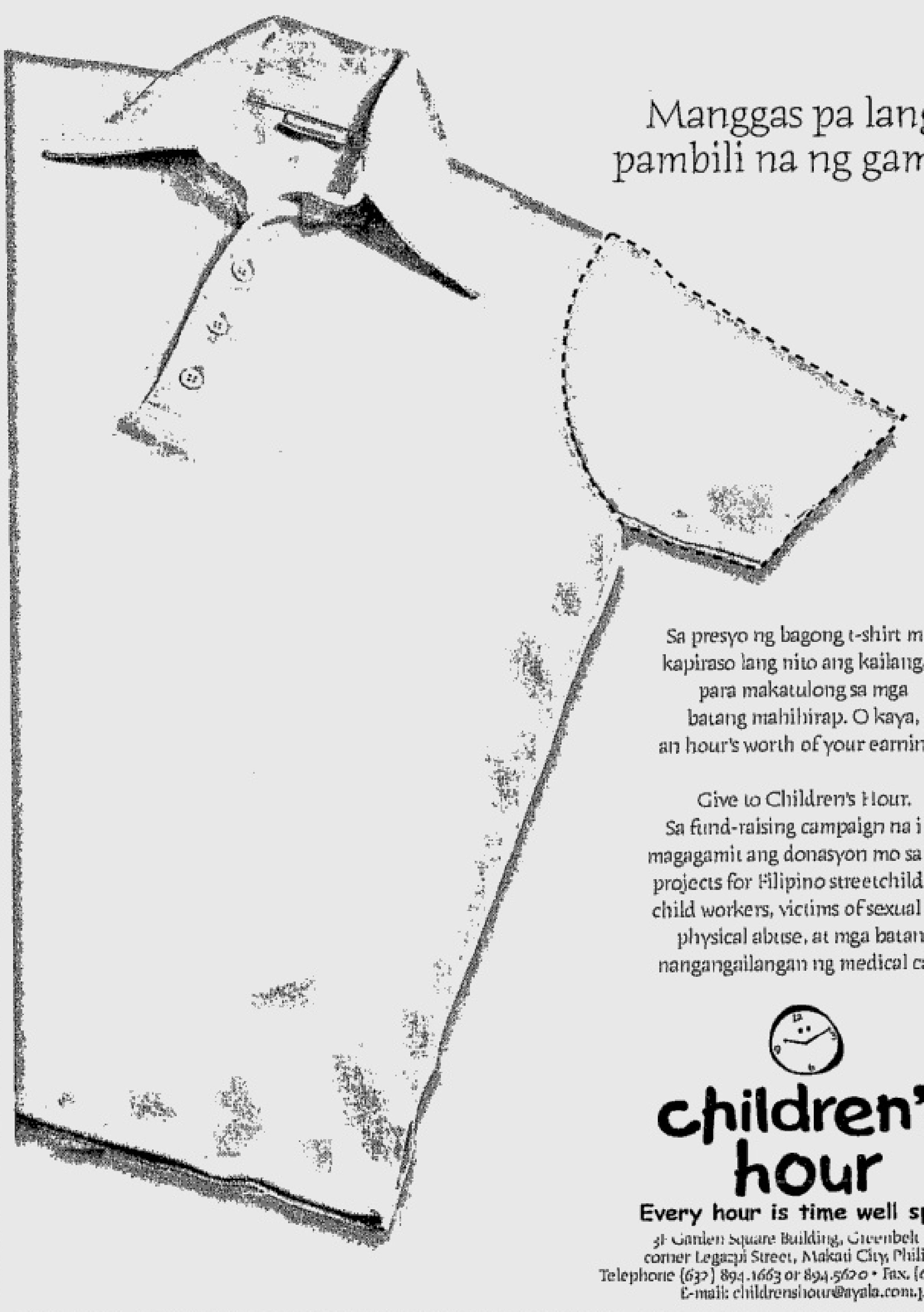
However, Edgar Jularbal, DOT senior tourism officer, noted that several hotels in the city reported booking cancellations after the bombings in Bali, Indonesia, on Oct. 11.

He said the Bali bombings had prompted government and tourism officials to implement security measures in tourist spots in the country.

He said DOT officials sent them a memorandum asking them to ensure the security of all hotels and inns and tourist spots, especially during holidays.

Many tourists cancelled their participation in the Third North Luzon Expedition, a five-day adventure caravan in the Cordillera and Cagayan Valley, after the Bali bombings, he said.

"There had been so many cancellations during that time. We were expecting 400, but only 200 of them came," Jularbal said. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*



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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel ● Bureau Chief Floreño G. Solmirano

Church seeks national shrine status

By Mei Magsino
San Jose, Batangas

FOR pilgrims on *visita iglesia* (visiting churches), the 237-year-old San Jose Parish Church is always in the top five in their itinerary list.

Some devotees say the church gives them a sense of total peace and serenity that other places do not have. But others say it is the feel of homely atmosphere that makes it a must-visit, even for travelers.

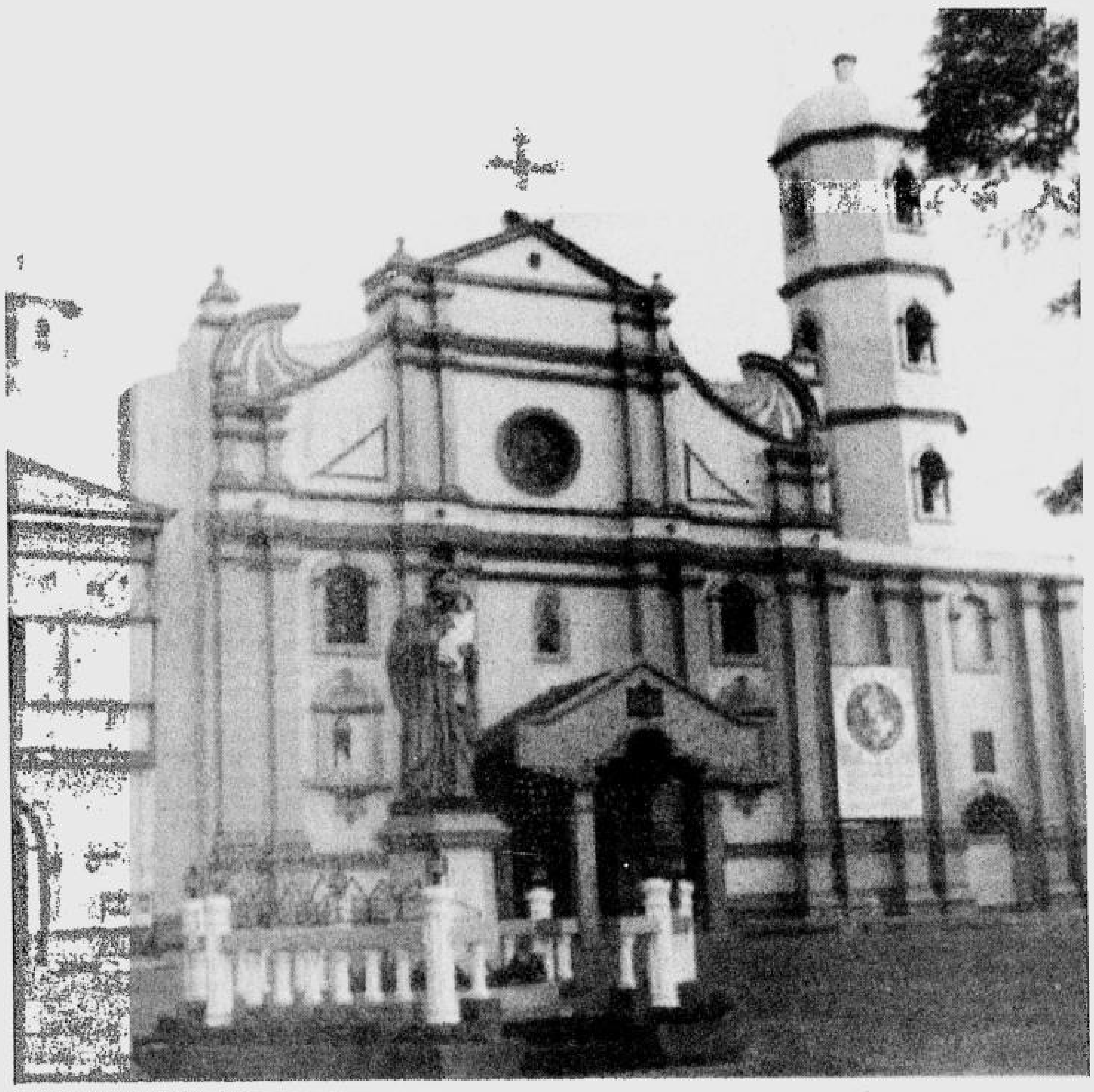
"Bathed by the serene light of a tropical moon, its silver cupola majestically lifted to the stars as if to beg a prayer, and its massive walls nearly concealed among the cool and familiar shades of perfumed *calachuchi*, caressing *acacia* trees and drifting coconut palms, the parish church of San Jose, Batangas, stands as a glaring symbol of man's earthly existence, his dream to comprehend the cosmos, and his enduring faith in an Almighty God," wrote Fr. Rey de la Cruz of the beautiful and artistic church of San Jose in the "Prelude" of the "Golden Book of San Jose" published 30 years ago.

Many books and poems have also been written in praise of the parish church, which the people of San Jose were able to preserve through individual labor, expertise and hard-earned money that they volunteered to give for its improvement.

Built in 1765 during the administration of Spanish friars of the Order of St. Augustine, the church is now run by the Oblates of St. Joseph. Today, it still has the same charms that attract people to spend even a short while in prayer or visit the structure whose artistic value has been preserved for centuries.

For the local residents, the church deserves to be recognized as a national treasure.

According to parish priest John de Castro, OSJ, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines is set to declare the church a national shrine.



THE 237-year-old parish church in San Jose, Batangas continues to attract people for even a short visit. MEI MAGSINO

Centuries-old

Nestled on top of a hill surrounded by age-old trees and ancestral homes that gives more attraction to the small town of San Jose, the church stands even more majestically.

The town, situated between the booming cities of Batangas and Lipa, has always been a stopover for travelers. One of the province's biggest food baskets, San Jose is known as the egg producer of Luzon, supplying 60 percent of Metro Manila's egg and chicken requirements daily.

As most of the town's residents are medical professionals who are also engaged in livestock business, it seems amazing that they still have the time and effort to spend preserving a historical and religious landmark.

"The attitude of the parishioners of San Jose reflects that of their patron saint's. From the very beginning, they have volunteered to carry the stones, sands, mortars and other building materials to the site and build this beautiful church, convent and patio that we have today," De Castro said.

How a massive edifice has come to survive the test of years, wars and weather has also become a wonder.

Built on April 26, 1765, the structure still stands alive with its architectural design intact and its interiors still promise marvel to the eyes for more years.

The external paint color has changed, but the awe and serenity are still there.

Outside, some of the *calachuchi* are gone, but the *acacia* trees have grown so big that they seem to adorn the church facade with dainty pink flowers during summer while providing cool shade to the people and the structure.

Everyday, travelers are seen going up the steps to the church to rest and pray, while those coming in cars park under the cool shades of the trees and visit the church.

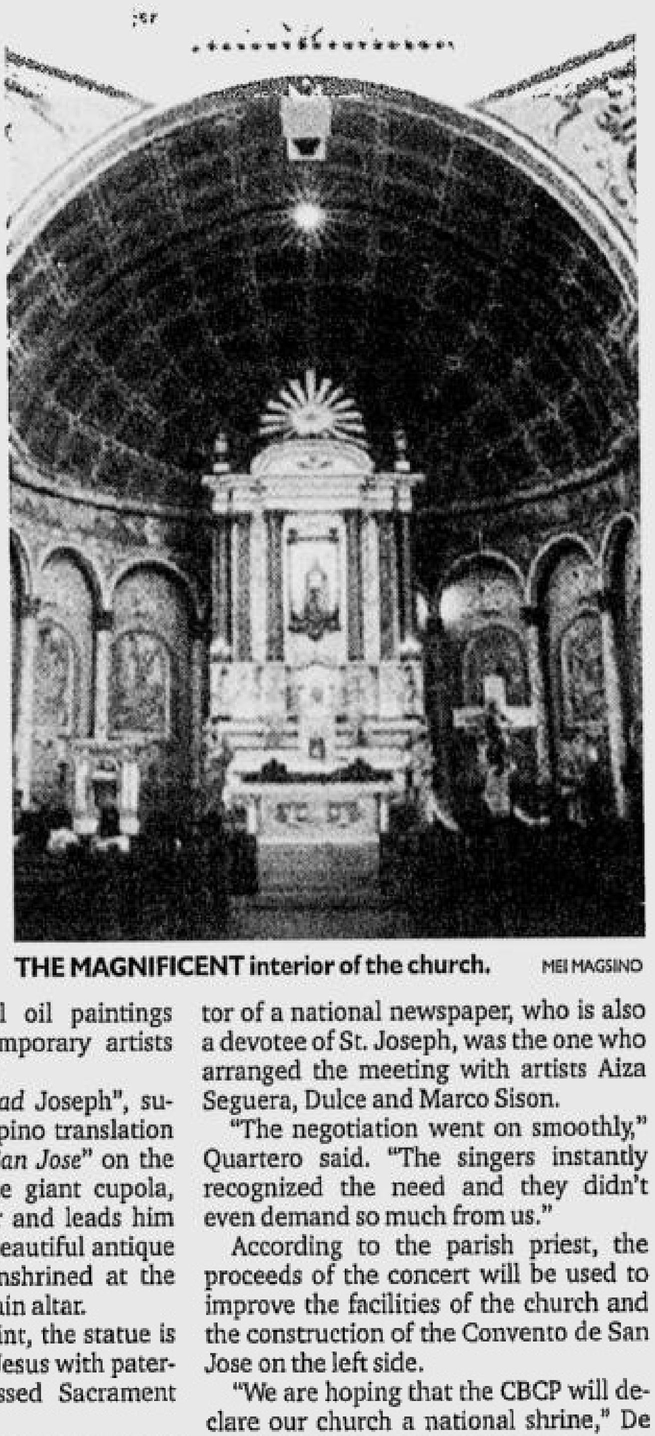
Charm

The imposing central dome is still the dominant sentinel that it used to be, watching with vigilance and care over homes bound by tradition and charity.

During World War II, when most of the places of worship were bombed by the Japanese forces, the San Jose Church suffered only slight exterior damage. It was repaired by the parishioners as soon as the war ended.

"When the spirit of unity is in the people, and they move as one, nothing can destroy this church," Dr. Miguel Ambal, a businessman, said.

The interior is still a real marvel. The paintings on the ceiling remain amazing. Except for the cornices, everything else inside the church is original.



THE MAGNIFICENT interior of the church. MEI MAGSINO

The latest additional oil paintings done by famous contemporary artists are a colorful catechism.

The inscriptions "*Ite ad* Joseph", superimposed with its Filipino translation "*Magsakdal kay Poong San Jose*" on the main arc supporting the giant cupola, greets every worshipper and leads him to train his sight at the beautiful antique statue of St. Joseph, enshrined at the highest portion of the main altar.

From this vantage point, the statue is seen cuddling the child Jesus with paternal care over the Blessed Sacrament right beneath the feet.

St. Joseph is the same protective foster father who took care of Jesus in his home in Nazareth. Like their patron saint, the parishioners, according to De Castro, have been taking good care of their church.

Priceless treasures

Antique works of art that came from as far as Italy have been one of the most captivating features inside the church.

The gold tabernacle is one priceless piece. The figure of the mother pelican bird feeding its chicks with its own blood etched on the door of the tabernacle reminds everyone of God's unconditional love for men. It is the most central and focal point inside the church and is always partially covered with thin laces embroidered with semiprecious stones. It is perennially kept clean by the ladies of the Parish Liturgical Environment Committee.

The pulpit from where the priests used to preach is preserved intact. It is adorned with gold leaves, symbolic of the words of God heard through the preacher.

But many of the precious antiques are gone. The antique giant lamp that used to dominate the altar is missing.

According to the church *manangs*, during big celebrations, the tall brass candle stands used to fill both sides of the aisle from the main door to the communion rail.

Today, only six of the antique candle stands are left.

A beautiful stole brought by Italian fathers was also gone. In 1971, it was borrowed by *cursillo* staff members but was never returned. It was later declared lost.

Many more antique pieces are missing and the Parish Historical Commission has been tasked with the impossible mission of recovering them.

"But in reality, and even history can prove it, the real priceless treasure of San Jose are the people who have been working hard and volunteering to help us," Father De Castro said.

Inspiration

Despite the lost treasures, the people still help renovate the church.

The Parish Finance Council, headed by lawyer Asuncion Kalalo and Irene Ambal, held a concert on Oct. 12 to raise funds for the improvement of the church.

"When the project was announced, the people moved to help us," Ambal said. "Even the singers agreed to help even on our first meeting."

Nestor Quartero, entertainment editor of a national newspaper, who is also a devotee of St. Joseph, was the one who arranged the meeting with artists Aiza Seguera, Dulce and Marco Sison.

"The negotiation went on smoothly," Quartero said. "The singers instantly recognized the need and they didn't even demand so much from us."

According to the parish priest, the proceeds of the concert will be used to improve the facilities of the church and the construction of the Convento de San Jose on the left side.

"We are hoping that the CBCP will declare our church a national shrine," De Castro said, "We have been preparing for that since June. And with all the help we've been getting, having a church and parishioners this united is inspiring enough."

A cave where the cool wind blows

RAPPELING down the entrance of the Hoyop-hoyopan Cave in Camalig, Albay. FREDDIE ROSAROS

By Carlos Santos Gegantoca
Contributor

A VISIT to Albay is incomplete if one does not go to the Hoyop-hoyopan Cave in Camalig town.

The Hoyop-hoyopan Cave, a 30-minute vehicle ride from Legazpi City, is situated on a hill overlooking Cotmon in Camalig.

For a small fee, a guide tours visitors inside the cave, leading them to a dark passageway where huge stalagmites and stalactites greet are found. Visitors are advised to walk carefully lest they hit jutting rocks or fall into shallow pools of water.

After a few minutes of walking on a dark alley, one reaches a spacious natural hall carved from huge rocks. Passing through narrow passageways, one finally reaches the cave's major outlet through which an invigorating mountain breeze blows gently. After all, Hoyop-hoyopan, in Bicol, means "a place where the wind blows."

Another interesting feature is a small, natural container that resembles a baptismal font. The vessel, according to Alfredo Nieva, a cave guide, does not dry up, even during summer.

Visitors are urged to dip their fingers into the natural basin and wet their forehead, throat or breast. By doing this, any disease that they have will be cured, Nieva claimed.

Another attraction inside the cave is an elongated rock that looks like a hand. One should shake hands with it, the guide would advise, so as to free oneself from punishment by the fairies and the spirits who inhabit the cave.

But with or without sickness, visitors who complete the tour will surely come out refreshed and invigorated.

The author is a retired professor of the Bicol University in Legazpi City.

November is Clean Air Month

Department of Environment and Natural Resources

DENR Spearheads Clean Air Drive

Environment Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez is calling on the public to help stop air pollution as the country celebrates Clean Air Month this November.

This year's celebration, dubbed "*Let's All Act to Clean the Air,*" launches an intensified, all-out multi-sectoral support program in promoting awareness on issues concerning air pollution in line with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's programs on clean air.

Throughout the month, the DENR will hold a series of awareness-raising activities to broaden the participation of government, business, the academe and civil society in cleaning the air.

Among these are transport and media fora; orientation meetings on the Clean Air Act for stakeholders such as industries, transport sector, local government units (LGUs), and the academe; and free emissions-testing for public and private vehicles.

"Sustaining efforts and forging partnerships from all sectors of society to clean the air are part of the central thrusts of the Department and of this year's celebration of the Clean Air Month," Alvarez stressed.

Air pollution is caused by increased emissions of carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, oxides of nitrogen and sulfur and particulate matter from sources that burn fuels for energy.

Through the years, government has come up with a holistic approach to cleaning the air, starting with the initiative of then Senator Alvarez in 1992 – the Healthy Air Pact – a voluntary reduction of lead in fuel by the country's major oil companies that paved the way for the introduction of unleaded gasoline in the market.

In 1997, President Fidel V. Ramos signed Presidential Proclamation No. 1109, also through the help of Senator Alvarez, declaring the month of November of every year as Clean Air Month.

And in 1999, Congress passed the Philippine Clean Air Act, setting emission standards that will help curb air pollution both from stationary sources (power plants, factories and industries) and from mobile sources (cars, jeeps, buses and other motor vehicles).

In coordination with the Department of Transportation and Communication (DOTC) and the private sector, the DENR is helping to put up emission testing centers throughout the country. Through these centers, motor vehicles will have to comply with emission standards in the Clean Air Act prior to vehicle registration.

Last year, the DENR, through its corporate arm, Natural Resources Development Corporation (NRDC), entered into an agreement with the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines (FEDJODAP) for a loan package that will allow the replacement of old, rundown diesel-fueled engines with reconditioned ones that will comply with emission standards of the Clean Air Act.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is presented with the World Business Summit Award for Sustainable Development Partnerships for RP's Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power Project by Shell Philippine Exploration B.V. (SPEX) managing director Jeremy Cliff (left), with Environment Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez (right), Texaco Phils. Malampaya asset manager Karl Cotrell, Netherlands Ambassador Theo Arnolf and SPEX manager Mike Wooton. The award, recognizing the effective multi-stakeholder partnerships between the Philippine government, SPEX and NGOs in ensuring that the natural gas project does not harm the environment and the local communities, was received by Secretary Alvarez as head of the RP delegation to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In September this year, the Philippines joined the global community in advocating for the use of renewable, indigenous and cleaner energy sources to arrest global warming in a declaration signed by world leaders during the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg, South Africa.

At the same Earth Summit, the country's use of natural gas through the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power Project off the coast of Palawan won for the Philippines the World Business Summit Award for Sustainable Development Partnerships.

Similar alternative fuels, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), are being presented by the DENR to the public as possible alternative "clean-burning" energy sources that will replace the more polluting coal and fossil fuels.

One of these is biodiesel, a type of fuel used in Europe and the United States as a clean-burning alternative fuel derived from vegetable oils, particularly coconut oil.

Last month, Secretary Alvarez, receiving the Coal-Fired Thermal Power Plants (CFTPPs) group's Manifesto of Compliance with Environmental Rules and Regulations on behalf of President Arroyo, challenged the country's energy players for an increase of 10% every year of clean energy use such as wind, hydropower, solar, biomass, and geothermal, until the country will no longer be dependent on coal and crude oil.

With the financial support from various financial institutions such as the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Secretary Alvarez issuance Department Administrative Order No. 2002-23, establishing the Air Quality Management Fund (AQMF).

The order formally activated a special account in the National Treasury to ensure continued funding for the Clean Air Act. The AQMF can be utilized for activities that will improve the quality of air throughout the country. The DENR also took affirmative steps to clean the air of Metro Cebu and its nearby areas after Secretary Alvarez signed Memorandum Circular No. 2002-11, designating four (4) cities and six (6) municipalities of the province of Cebu as part of the Metro Cebu airshed.

Early this year, Alvarez also designated the provinces of Region III, Region IV-A and municipalities of the National Capital Region (NCR) as the Metro Manila Airshed. Some of the proposed airsheds for designation are Davao, Cagayan de Oro and the Cordillera Autonomous Region (CAR).

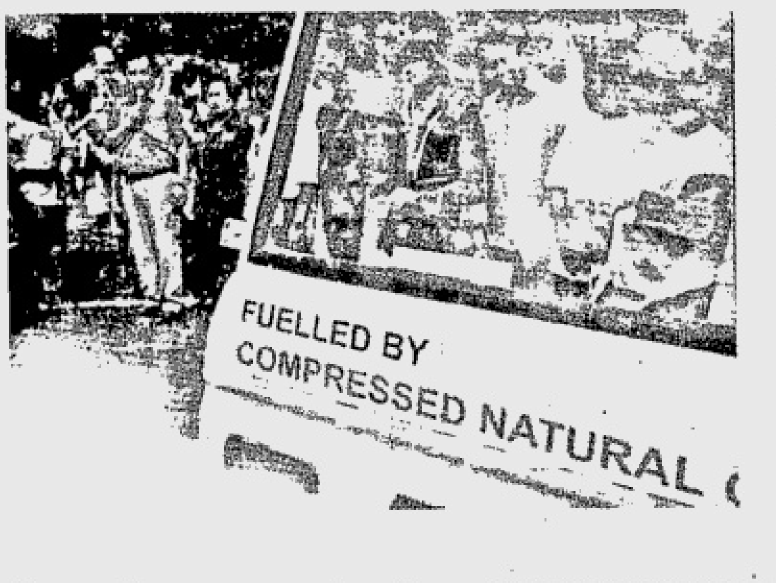
The designation of "geographic air boundaries" and its governing board will aid the DENR to check air quality, set up emission standards, including penalties for a particular airshed, as well as draw up anti-pollution programs suited for a given area, which may vary from one airshed to another.

A fully-operational Ambient Air Quality Monitoring with Telemetry System was established within the Xavier University campus (Ateneo de Cagayan) as a joint undertaking of the Environmental Management Bureau (EMB) Region 10 Office and the university.

The automatic and unmanned system enables the DENR to monitor the air quality in the immediate vicinity of Cagayan de Oro City in real time, at any given hour.

The country has reached positive strides in the fight to clean the air. But we need to instill a culture of responsible caring for the environment. But the DENR cannot wage this battle alone. We need the help of communities, schools, civil society, LGUs and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Together, let us all act to clean the air.



Secretary Alvarez presents to the public a modified utility vehicle run by compressed natural gas (CNG) which has cleaner emissions during the Earth Day celebration.

Accreditation of private emission testing centers sought

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) in cooperation with the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) are encouraging private enterprises to submit their applications to the Private Emission Testing Center (PETC) program in support of the campaign for clean air.

DTI Undersecretary Adrian S. Cristobal said that the government under President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is committed to provide efficient PETCs that will assure the general public of valid and competent emission test results.

He also added that the number of PETC applicants show that there is investor confidence in the accreditation process.

About 240 applicants nationwide have already gone through the initial stages of the accreditation process as of this October.

To date, 34 applications were already accredited nationwide and five (5) PETCs, all based in Manila, have already been accredited and authorized by DTI and DOTC.

Under the Clean Air Act, motor vehicles need to present a Certificate of Emission Compliance (CEC) prior to renewal of LTO registration.

Government operatives test emission levels of a truck as part of the intensified anti-smoke belching program of President Arroyo.

DENR to use biodiesel for its vehicles

Secretary Alvarez will soon launch an alternative fuel facility at the DENR Compound on Visayas Avenue, to underscore the importance of alternative fuel in the campaign for clean air.

A Memorandum of Agreement will be forged between DENR, Senbel Fine Chemicals Co., Inc. and Petroline Resources, Inc.

Biodiesel is one of the best substitutes for petroleum diesel in the market today, which complies with standards set by the Philippine Clean Air Act. It is biodegradable and non-toxic, and may also be used without any modifications in diesel engines. Studies show that using biodiesel in diesel engines significantly reduces carbon dioxide emission by 78% and carbon monoxide by 50% — the primary causes of air pollution in Metro Manila — and sulfates, which causes respiratory ailments, by 100%

"By advocating its use, we also seek to increase local demand for coconut oil, giving our coconut farmers added sustained source of livelihood," Alvarez stressed.

Under the agreement, Senbel chemicals will supply the biodiesel and Petroline the petroleum diesel that will be used on all vehicles of the Department to comply with the emission standards set by the Clean Air Act.

"As the lead agency in the implementation of the Act, we need to practice what we preach. The transport sector must learn of the advantages of biodiesel. And coupled with proper vehicle maintenance, this would ensure lower harmful emissions," the environment chief said.

Some of its benefits of using biodiesel include high lubricating properties, which lessens the wear and tear of engines, and improves fuel ignition and combustion.

Multi-Sectoral commitment towards alternative fuels

The Department of Energy (DOE) has drawn special attention on the need to explore alternative fuels to sustain the country's goal for healthy air.

In a recent workshop organized by the Partnership for Clean Air with assistance from the Netherlands government, Energy Secretary Vicente S. Perez, Jr. said that the Government is looking into healthier fuel options.

DOE has recently created an Alternative Fuels Technology Division to focus on clean fuels such as Compressed Natural Gas (CNG), Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), and "coco-diesel," a coconut oil-diesel blend.

"Our program seeks to ensure that the transport sector has access to alternative fuel sources that do not endanger our health. We have to diversify and reduce our dependence on Middle Eastern oil," he said.

The Netherlands government calls on the Philippines to develop cleaner fuel sources for vehicles in the face of significant health and economic costs caused by air pollution.

LPG/CNG VEHICLES FOR A CLE
TOMORROW IN METRO MANI

Ms. Bebet Gozun, PCA Coordinating Committee Chairperson; Mr. Charles Melhuish, ADB Lead Transport Sector Specialist, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez; H.E. Theo Arnold, Netherlands Ambassador to the Philippines and Director Patrick Giraud, ADB Southeast Asia Infrastructure Division.

LANDBANK offers credit facility for transport and industries

LANDBANK of the Philippines (LBP) is currently offering an Air Pollution Control Credit Facility (APCCF), a Y-3B credit facility from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) which aims to finance projects for clean air among transport and industry sectors.

At present, three companies have been approved for the loan facility namely Vallacar Transit, Inc. released with the full P120M, Angeles Power Inc., amounting to P9.2M and Bagong Lipunan Transit Inc. with P16.4M still unavailed.

LBP is still awaiting results of applications of about 10 clients from the transport and industry sector.

APCCF funds may be used for purchase or installation of air quality monitoring and pollution control equipment, among others.

Moreover, it could be utilized to procure new buses, and rehabilitate existing transport fleets through retrofitting and installation of other equipment to reduce harmful emissions.

The Partner Institutions of the Clean Air Program

Supporting the DENR in implementing the Program to clean the air are the following partner government agencies, private sector institutions and non-government organizations (NGOs)

● Department of Energy (DOE) ● Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) - Bureau of Products standards (BPS), Bureau of Immigration Services (BIS), Board of Investments (BOI) ● Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) - Land Transportation Office (LTO), Land Transportation Franchise and Regulatory Board (LTFRB), Light Rail Transport Authority (LRTA), Philippine National Railway (PNR) ● Department of Health (DOH) ● Department of Finance (DOF) ● Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) ● Department of Budget and Management (DBM) ● Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) ● Philippine Information Agency (PIA) ● Philippine National Police (PNP) ● National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) ● Concerned Citizens Against Pollution (COCAP) ● Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) ● Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) ● Local Government Units of the National Capital Region and Regions 3 and 4.

Advt.

Palace told to take coup talk seriously

From page A1

has gone to the level of colonels, the battalion commanders," whom he described as "officers in control of fighting units."

A military intelligence officer earlier said the coup plotters were reported to be recruiting soldiers belonging to at least three Army divisions, the Special Operations Command, the Philippine Marines, and an Air Force strike wing for a power grab either this month or the next.

Hogwash

But the military spokesperson, retired Brig. Gen. Eduardo Purificacion, dismissed talk about the coup as "hogwash." He nevertheless said the AFP was monitoring the activities of groups suspected of fomenting destabilization.

The Philippine National Police (PNP) also belittled reports of a coup plot, saying it has not monitored any recruitment of its personnel in its headquarters in Camp Crame.

Director Ricardo de Leon, head of the PNP directorate for community relations, said policemen were so preoccupied with their jobs that they had no time for plotting a takeover of the government with the military. "We're all busy attending to our problems. Besides, a military coup is passé," he said.

Malacañang opted not to issue a statement on reports of a coup plot. But First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, when reached for comment, said: "There will be no coup because the military and PNP are with President Macapagal."

"It (reports of coup threats) is just a gimmick of the opposition to make the President look weak," Arroyo said.

National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said there was no moral issue that could spark a coup.

Abadia said the issues raised against the President include delays in the standardization of salaries of soldiers, alleged corruption involving Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, and perceived weakness in the AFP leadership because of Malacañang's "revolving door policy" in naming AFP chiefs of staff. *(See story on Page A1)*

The Peoples' Consultative Assembly (PCA) also confirmed plans by military officers to stage a coup, saying it was scheduled for the All Saints' Day holidays, but that it failed to materialize.

But PCA's Linda Montayre has a new spin on the coup reports. She claimed that it was actually hatched by Ms Macapagal, Reyes and three other officials.

Palace-led coup

In a telephone interview, Montayre said the coup was intended to give fresh legitimacy to the Macapagal administration given the possibility that it would not last until 2004.

She said the President planned to put up a military junta made up of Ms Macapagal, Reyes, AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Benjamin Defensor, Golez, and a fifth official whose name Montayre could not recall.

Montayre said the plan was facing rough sailing because soldiers were not buying the idea. She said the date of the coup was initially scheduled for last week, but alleged differences between Reyes and Golez—who blame each other for the $30 million in military aid scrapped by the US recently—led to the scuttling of the plan.

Apart from the alleged Malacañang-initiated coup plot, she said she also heard about plans by middle-level and low-ranking military officials to stage a coup.

Montayre said this group wanted to oust Ms Macapagal for her failure to keep her promise of financial benefits to the military and her inability to improve the economy and fight graft.

"These soldiers are aghast over the government's lack of direction and sense of priority," she said. "These are the people who wonder why the government has no money, but Dante Ang—the President's publicist—can go on a buying spree of banks."

Abadia said delays in granting the salary increase were fueling resentment in the military. Under the present set-up, the pay increase will be implemented in three installments, with the last one due in 2004.

"If the salaries of policemen have been standardized in one shot, why can't it be done to the military?" Abadia said.

The delay in the pay increase for soldiers is normal, according to Golez.

Missing P500 million

Abadia said corruption in the administration was also fueling discontent in the barracks. He mentioned allegations that Defense Secretary Reyes had squirreled away about P500 million previously allotted for internal security operations.

Aside from this, Reyes is accused of promoting favored officers and giving them choice assignments. "It's not the point system based on merit but *kung sino lang ang ituturo ni* Reyes," Abadia said.

He said soldiers were also complaining about lack of material support in the field.

Abadia also took issue at the "revolving door policy" in the appointment of AFP chiefs of staff.

He said the AFP leadership was perceived to be weak because of Malacañang's policy of naming short-term chiefs of staff like in the case of retired Gen. Roy Cimatu and his successor Gen. Benjamin Defensor Jr. Cimatu served as AFP chief of staff for only four months.

Defensor assumed the top AFP post on Sept. 10 two days before he reached his mandatory retirement age of 56. He will serve as AFP chief of staff for only 69 days, or until Nov. 18.

"These issues cannot be dismissed outright," Abadia said. "They (Palace) should take this (threat) seriously."

Forget the coup

Two senators who figured prominently in previous coup attempts told would-be plotters to forget hatching a coup plot as it was bound to fail at this time.

Sen. Gregorio Honasan, who took part in the 1987 and 1989 mutinies against the then Aquino administration, said any coup attempt without the people's support would not succeed.

For his part, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said there was no danger of a coup as long as the people were not supporting it.

"What the government must be worried about is the possibility of a widespread people's discontent that could trigger mass protest movements in the same level as Edsa I and Edsa II," he said. ***With reports from Martin Marfil, TJ Burgonio and Cynthia D. Balana in Manila; and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

Rod Strunk doesn't live here anymore

From page A1

so, in Elena's words, a silent house.

"We really miss Dory," Elena says, calling the actress by the nickname known to family and close friends. "She's a tremendous loss."

And the memories are still fresh: "It used to be that whenever she came home from work, her voice rang through the rooms, asking us how we were."

Whereas before, their lives revolved around the mistress of the house, now they merely plod on. "I focus on my chores to stop myself from thinking of her too much. But then, there comes a time when you can't help but think of her," Elena says, her voice trailing off.

During those times, Elena goes to Nida's room, which has remained untouched, and talks to her in prayer.

"I always pray that she help all of us, especially Kaye. It's terrible what Kaye has to bear."

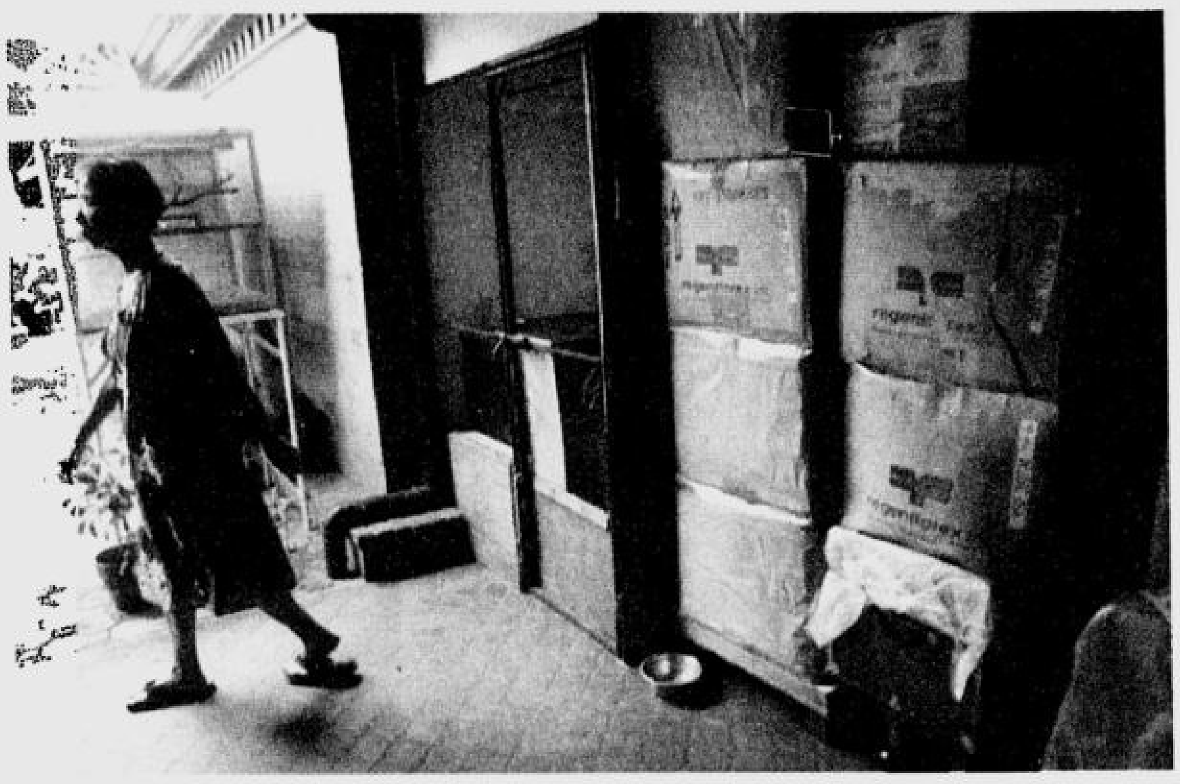
Fastidious

Kaye has taken over the household's day-to-day expenses and is as fastidious a homemaker as her mother was, Elena says.

Everything is in place, like the way it was when Nida was alive, except that there is now a large electronic treadmill in the actress' bedroom that Kaye uses to keep fit and ward off boredom.

The apparent main difference between mother and daughter is that Nida liked cats. The kitten that slept on Nida's bed every night is now full-grown and has been banished to the quarters of the spouses Cedes and Angel, the actress' longtime help.

And the plants in the terrace by Nida's bedroom are gone. The wall on which bromeliads and ferns were once clustered is now bare.



"IT IS as if he never existed." And Elena dela Paz, Nida Blanca's trusted aide for 45 years, makes sure the murdered actress' husband's belongings are all packed in boxes and out of the house. VAL HANDUMON

"It's really different without the mistress of the house," Elena says.

The loss is most evident in Nida's mother Inocencia Alcueza, who, Elena says, is often quiet and dispirited. (During the interview, we often catch Inang, now 89, gazing into the distance.)

Elena says Inang's tears have somewhat subsided, but she still retreats to Nida's bedroom just to feel her presence. She also likes to sit in the living room where huge paintings of the actress, done when she was a star in the 1960s, hang on the wall.

"I like to sit here because I remember her here," says Inang. "It's like she's here. Sometimes I wish she'll talk with me."

Determined

If Inang finds solace in remembering her daughter, seeking justice for Nida has become Kaye's reason for being.

According to Kaye's legal counsel Harriet Demetriou, Kaye always attends the meetings at Camp Crame of the team investigating the case, and has been very supportive of its endeavors.

Flying to Manila from her base in the United States and back, not to mention the emotions attendant to a coming to terms with a death so violent, has taken its toll on Kaye. But she is determined and relentless in pursuing the case.

The former justice says that as soon as Kaye arrived last Nov. 2, her client asked to be updated on what took place during her absence.

"Kaye has a complete file of all the documents and the sworn statements of the witnesses," Harriet says. "And she's very focused. There's no way you can take her away from it. She's very driven, and that's the only thing that moves her now."

Harriet, a close friend of the family, often checks on Inang when Kaye is in the United States.

She met Nida in 1991 in connection with a case the actress filed before her court (Branch 37 Pasig RTC) against a group of squatters trying to wrest possession of a property of Nida's in Antipolo.

"I didn't even know she was Nida Blanca because what was docketed was Dorothy Jones, her real name," Harriet recalls.

The last time the two friends saw each other was on Nov. 5, 2001, when they were together from morning until early evening for the late Bong Erana's cremation rites and prayer services.

Harriet remembers Nida's last words to her: "See you at Forbes (Park) tomorrow for the Mass for Bong."

Because of another appointment, Harriet did not make it to the Mass. Neither did Nida.

Defensor caught . . .

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Defensor was named to the top military post on Sept. 10, but he reached the mandatory retirement age of 56 on Sept. 12.

His term ends on Nov. 18. His predecessor Gen. Roy Cimatu was AFP chief of staff for four months.

Bush's "displeasure" has been relayed to Ms Macapagal through Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, according to the source.

The "message" from Bush has also been "articulated" to Malacañang through US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone, the source said.

"The message was that having short-term chiefs of staff will not help her build a strong republic," he said.

Despite Bush's displeasure, Ms Macapagal "wants another shot at the revolving door policy and wants to appoint another AFP chief of staff on a 90-day term before finally appointing someone on a long-term basis," the source said.

Ms Macapagal's revolving door policy was also listed in the "talking points" prepared by the US military attaché in the Philippines for the meeting between Reyes and his American counterpart Donald Rumsfeld in August in Washington D.C.

"But the topic was deleted when the attaché realized that one of the contenders to the position of AFP chief of staff was in the meeting," the source said.

Then AFP deputy chief of staff Lt. Gen Narciso Abaya was with Reyes in that meeting. Abaya was named Southcom chief on Oct. 17.

PMA Class 69

A text message said Defensor was "destabilizing his own armed forces to compel the President to extend his term. His cohorts are no less than his classmates, PMA class 69."

"CSAFP Defensor is using 5M AFP money to finance PR effort for the extension of his term. He wants to stay in power to amass more wealth. Be vigilant," another message said.

Defensor said he was unperturbed by the messages. He said he had met with his classmates the past days not to plot a coup but to practice their voices.

"Perhaps people behind this are getting insecure because they don't have the singing ability of the members of PMA class 69," he said in a statement.

"We've been practicing regularly in Camp Aguinaldo for our fund-raising concert and now they want people to believe we are plotting something," he added.

PMA class '69, which includes Ambassador Guillermo Wong, former Army chief Jaime de los Santos and AFP vice chief Lt. Gen. Gregorio Camiling, plans to come out with a CD titled "Sounds of 69."

'Parisian' brings profit, pride to the Philippines

From page A1

not around.

Earlier, in an interview with the INQUIRER, the three sisters had expressed strong opposition to the Luna sale, saying the painting belongs to the entire Nakpil clan.

But at the unveiling, Nakpil-Zialcita said she was overjoyed that the painting is now safely at home in the GSIS.

"I am very happy that the painting did not go to other countries and was returned to the Philippines," she told reporters in Tagalog.

Garcia enthused: "We at the GSIS are very happy that we are able to bring home this famous painting to its permanent residence."

Enjoy

He said it would be the first time in 110 years that the painting is available for viewing by the public.

"I think the GSIS members would be proud of having helped save a national treasure," Garcia added. "Enjoy it to your heart's delight."

And a delight it was.

"I never saw so many cameras focused on this painting as if it is the greatest work of art. Not even the Spoliarium (got this wide coverage)," Professor Eric Torres, former director of the Ateneo Art Gallery, said.

Nearly all the television networks and newspaper organizations in the country covered the event.

A roomful of art lovers and GSIS employees took turns taking their photographs beside the historic work of national hero Juan Luna.

Open to public

Some 60 guests, including art critics, cultural officials, museum curators and private citizens were invited to the "special preview" of the painting. The general public can view the painting for free during museum hours starting today.

Garcia was joined by GSIS vice president for public affairs Nilo Racimo and GSIS museum director Eric Zerrudo.

Aside from Torres, National Museum Director Corazon Alvina, National Commission for Culture and the Arts Executive Director Ma. Fina Yonzon, and Fernando Nakpil-Zialcita, Mercedes' son, were the panelists who spoke about the painting and Filipino heritage.

Leny de Jesus, Malacañang's former "Iron Lady," was also seen among the guests.

Nat'l cultural treasure

Torres was quick to concede that "Parisian Life" should definitely be declared a "national cultural treasure," the highest classification of a cultural object under Presidential Decree No. 374 or the Cultural Preservation and Protection Act of 1974.

Alvina said the painting would "probably" be declared a national cultural treasure by a panel of experts to be convened this month.

"I see this event as a very big step forward in the appreciation and preservation of our heritage," Alvina said, citing "all the attention" given to "Parisian Life."

Fernando gave the message on behalf of the family.

"How wonderful it is to see the painting, which I admired as a young man, now open to admiration by others in a public space," he said.

He said their immediate family was not a beneficiary of the painting's sale because it was "passed over to (her mother's) first cousin Angel Nakpil around 1961."

In the INQUIRER interview, Francisca said the painting was only borrowed from the ancestral house and that there was no will leaving it to any member of the clan.

Fernando said her mother's "foremost concern was that the painting should remain in this country for Filipinos to admire."

"Her wish was granted. And more," he said.

Luna room

He said he was happy to know that the Luna Room where the painting and its history will be housed will be redesigned to resemble the sala of the Bahay Nakpil Bautista, the painting's original home.

The antique house, built in 1914 by architect Arcadio Arellano, was where the painting's original owner Dr. Ariston Bautista Lin and the families of his brother-in-laws, Julio and Ramon, lived.

The 1892 painting featured Luna, Rizal and Bautista Lin gathered in a Paris café looking at a French woman. It is said to be the last gathering of the three revolutionaries before they returned to the country to wage the revolution against Spain.

Zerrudo said the design of the sala where the painting used to hang for decades would be replicated in the Luna Room.

Garcia drew attention to the unknown lady who dominates the painting.

'Female stranger'

He said in jest that this might be the "female stranger" Rizal referred to as "my friend, my joy," in his famous farewell before he was executed.

"Today, this anonymous woman is no stranger anymore," he said. "She will now be a friend who will give joy to every Filipino who will visit our museum."

Why spend millions?

Torres said many people were asking why the GSIS spent millions, P46 million to be exact, to buy this painting at the Christie's auction.

"Why not? It's a masterpiece by one of the greatest painters of the 19th century and it's now something all taxpayers can see," Torres said.

Can afford it

Besides, the GSIS can afford it. According to Garcia its net income rose by 42 percent to P21.75 billion from P15.31 billion the previous quarter.

He also said that the GSIS was targeting to post a net income of P30 billion this year from P25.8 billion last year.

Garcia said the state-owned pension provider for 1.5 million government employees did not squander the money of its members on the Luna.

Easily, he said, the GSIS can sell the painting at a 50 percent mark-up.

"At this time when the stock market is down and interest rates are very low . . . buying the painting is a wise investment," explained the GSIS chief.

Given a lack of investment opportunities, Garcia said, GSIS decided to increase its loans to members where it could earn between 12 and 14 percent.

Pride and profit

Also, the Luna investment was made after the GSIS had provided P18.34 billion in claims and benefits to its members.

There is no doubt that the acquisition of the Luna should bring pride and profits for the GSIS and its members, according to Garcia, not to mention generating a lot of goodwill, too.

"No need to pay for advertising," he added.

Controversy

The Bureau of Customs was first alerted to the auction of the Luna painting in Hong Kong by Ma. Clara "Kim" Camacho last month. Kim, wife of Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho, is the country manager of Sotheby's, a rival of Christie's.

Camacho's wife had called the BOC to stop the shipment of the Luna painting to Hong Kong citing that its shipment violated the law

The finance secretary supported his wife, saying that the Luna painting could not be sold because it was more than 100 years old.

He denied allegations of Sen. Tessie Aquino-Oreta that his wife Kim used her husband's influence at the BOC to block the auction being arranged by a rival auctioneer.

The highly publicized controversy preceding the Luna auction, according to the GSIS president, actually jacked up its original price of P14 million. It was sold for more than four times its market value.

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E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

SPORTS

Editor Al S. Mendoza ● Associate Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

Johnson wins 4th Cy Young Award

NEW YORK—Randy Johnson won yet another Cy Young Award. Johnson was a unanimous pick over Arizona teammate Curt Schilling, winning a record-tying fourth straight National League Cy Young and fifth overall— one short of Roger Clemens' record. **AP**

GLORIA GUEST OF HONOR

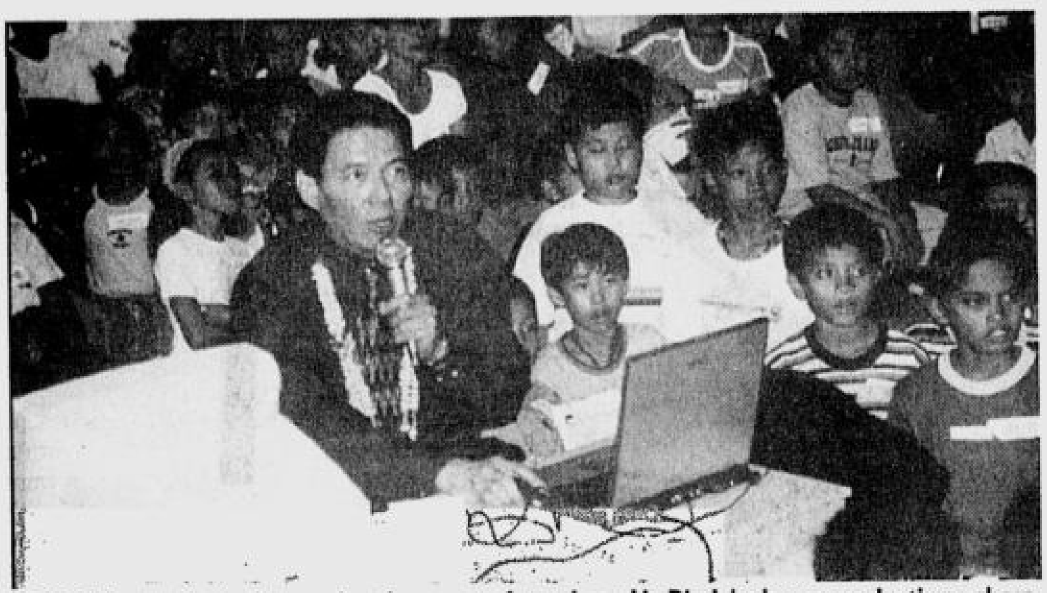
AsPac dancesport tourney gets under way Saturday

GARCIA

THE 20-NATION Asia Pacific Dancesport Championships, the biggest in many years, get going at 1 p.m. this Saturday, Nov. 9, at the Philsports Arena in Pasig City.

President Macapagal-Arroyo will be guest of honor in the dance spectacle hosted by the International Dancesport Federation (IDSF) and the Dancesport Council of the Philippines headed by Becky Garcia. Entered in the tournament, aside from the Philippines, are dance athletes from Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, China, Taipeh, Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, Lebanon, Macau, Sri Lanka, Singapore, Japan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Krygystan, Canada and the United States. They will be competing in three events, namely, IDSF amateur, youth and junior in both Standard and Latin categories.

Garcia, who is co-chair of the Asia Pacific dancefest with Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain, said the tournament sponsors are Philippine Olympic Committee, PCSO, Pagcor, PSC, Philippine Air Lines, Edsa Shangri-la, Dance Exchange, Pagoda Philippines, Carlines Transportation and ABC 5. For more information, call Anna Faye at 635-0116, Dancesport Training Center, Philsports complex, Pasig City; or Ruby at 752-0435 to 36, 26th floor Pacific Star Building on Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.


TORRE (center), who is manning the country's top board in Bled, is shown conducting a chess seminar for youngsters during the Grandmaster Eugenio Torre Chess Institute (Getci) in Tanauan City. Getci is part of Belgosa Media Systems Inc. and Active Chess Center of Asia Inc.'s efforts to promote chess in schools nationwide.

RP settles for 2-2 draw vs Colombia

BLED, Slovenia—The Philippine men's team failed to gain headway in the 10th round of the 35th Chess Olympiad, settling for a 2-2 draw against Colombia and staying outside of the Top 30 here.

International Master Nelson Mariano II missed a winning line and agreed to a draw while GMs Eugene Torre , Joey Antonio and Bong Villamayor also halved the point with their rivals as they lodged from the 32nd to 38th places with 22.5 points.

"We missed a chance to beat them (Colombians)," said Philippine team captain Samuel Estimo, referring to Mariano's failure to find the clinching move against Marcelo Uribe that could have given the Filipinos a 2.5-1.5 victory.

The 51-year-old Torre recovered from a slightly inferior position by winning a piece against GM Alonzo Zapata, but could not escape from drawish lines in a 68-move Torre Attack.

Torre's gallant effort came after Antonio and Villamayor drew their games.

Antonio drew with Dario Alzate in 31 moves of a Queen's Gambit, Tarrasch variation, Villamayor declared peace in a 40-move Catalan, Mariano drew with Uribe after 43 moves of a Sicilian Defense.

The Filipinos battle the Italians on the 11th round Wednesday.

Russia still leads with 28.5 points, following a 3-1 thrashing of China. Hungary is at second with 27.5 points.

WIM Arianne Caoili snapped a three-game losing streak to defeat untitled Laura Constantini in a 31-move Sicilian as the Filipinas blanked the Italians, 3-0.

Caoili sacrificed her queen to control the eighth rank on her 25th move and then gave away a knight on the 31st that doomed her rival.

WIM Beverly Mendoza overcame Eleanora Ambrosini in a 58-move Pirc Defense and Sheerie Joy Lomibao won in a 28-move Sicilian Defense.

The Filipinas, who are now tied from 39th to 46th places with 15.5 points, battle the best of Slovenia's three women's teams, the "A" squad, in the 11th round.

Georgia is the runaway leader with 24 points, followed by China with 21.5.

McGrady powers Magic; Lakers suffer all-time low

ORLANDO, Florida—Tracy McGrady broke the 40-point barrier for the second straight game, scoring 41 points Tuesday as the Orlando Magic held off a Sacramento rally to beat the Kings 125-121 in the NBA Tuesday night.

McGrady, coming off a 47-point performance in a road win at Milwaukee, made 15 of 27 shots and also had eight rebounds and seven assists for the Magic, who are off to a 4-1 start for the first time since 1996-97.

Grant Hill, who sat out the second half of Saturday's victory over the Bucks after feeling pain in his surgically repaired left ankle, had 21 points in 33 minutes while showing no signs of being hampered by the injury that sidelined him most of the last two seasons.

Bobby Jackson scored 16 of his 26 points in the fourth quarter, keying a rally from a 109-91 deficit in the last 8:25. The guard, starting because Mike Bibby is out with a broken foot, scored seven straight for the Kings to trim Orlando's lead to 122-121 with just under a minute to go.

Cavs 89, Lakers 70

In Cleveland, Zydrunas Ilgauskas scored 23 points as Cleveland won its home opener over the Shaquille O'Neal-less Lakers, whose point total was the franchise's lowest since moving to Los Angeles in 1960.

Ricky Davis added 24 points and Tyrone Hill had 17 rebounds for the Cavs, who dazzled a crowd of 19,833 by blowing out the three-time defending NBA champions.

Previously, the fewest points the Lakers had ever scored in a game since moving from Minneapolis was 74. Los Angeles shot just 32 percent, including 4-of-20 on 3-pointers.

Pacers 83, Heat 79

In Miami, Brad Miller scored 28 points and made key plays on both ends of the floor in the final minute to help Indiana beat Miami.

With the game tied at 77-77, Miller lobbed a perfect pass above the rim for Jermaine O'Neal, whose dunk put the Pacers ahead with 50 seconds remaining. Miller then blocked a shot by Eddie Jones, whose strong play helped Miami rally in the fourth quarter.

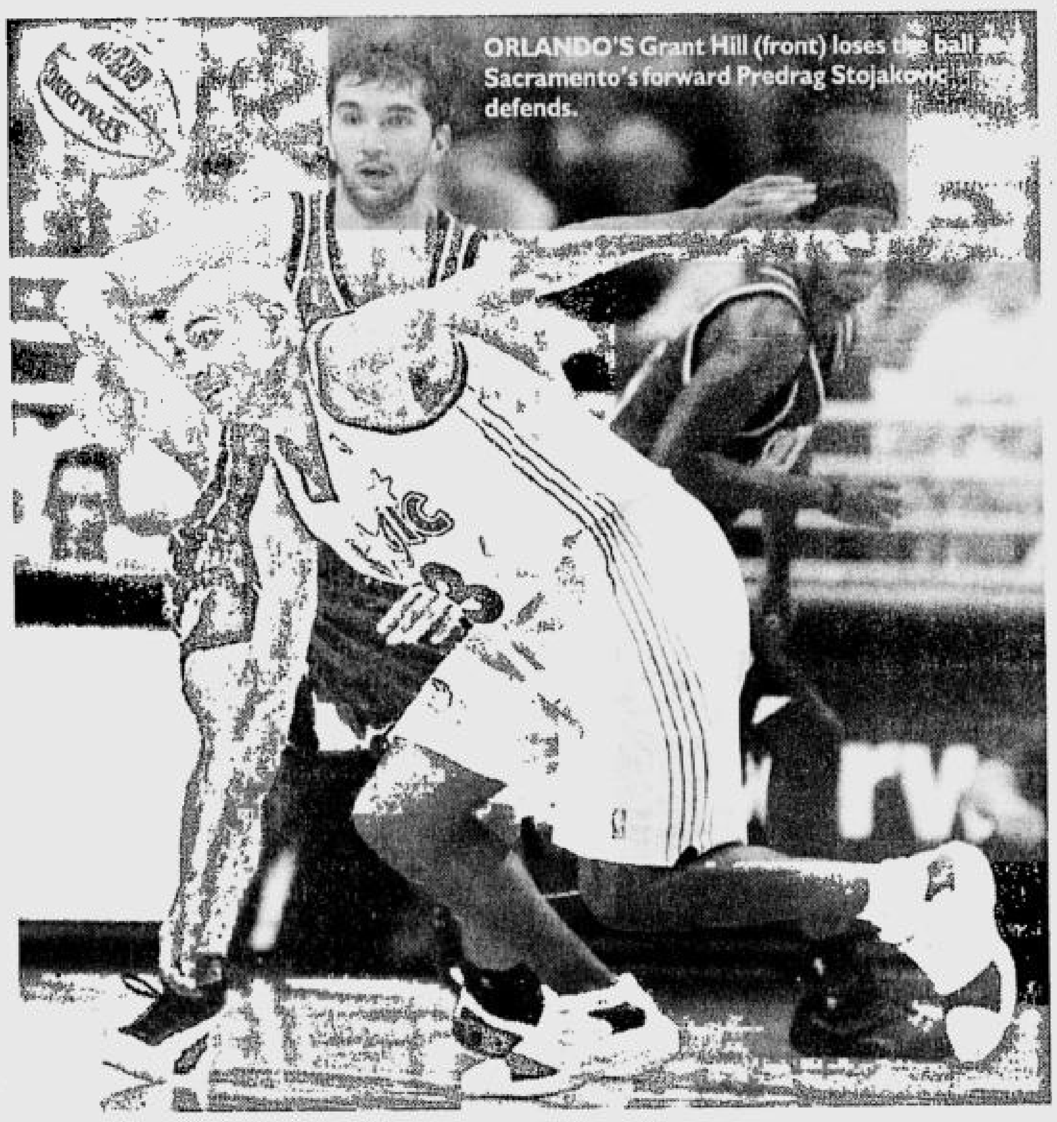
O'Neal scored 22 points and added 13 rebounds as the Pacers, playing without the injured Reggie Miller (ankle), improved to 3-1.

In Minneapolis, Kendall Gill rallied Minnesota with nine of his 22 points in the fourth quarter to lead the Timberwolves over Washington.

Kevin Garnett was 5-for-5 in the final period, and finished with 17 points and 16 rebounds for Minnesota, which outscored the Wizards 24-11 in the fourth.

Complete Results

Cleveland 89, LA Lakers 70; Orlando 125, Sacramento 121; Minnesota 90, Washington 86; Seattle 104, Houston 97; Indiana 83, Miami 79; San Antonio 93, Golden State 73; Atlanta 103, Denver 87. *AFP*


ORLANDO'S Grant Hill (front) loses the ball Sacramento's forward Predrag Stojakovic defends.

Champions League sked bared

ORGANIZERS of the Champions League 2002, the ultimate clash among the country's collegiate basketball champions, have released the complete schedule for the knockout elimination round.

After the Nov. 10 opening games pitting De La Salle against University of Baguio and University of Santo Tomas against University of Manila, a slam-bang do-or-die battle will follow next.

On Nov. 12, also at the Makati Coliseum, San Sebastian College, the reigning NCAA champion, takes on Philippine School of Busines Administration at 2 p.m., while Ateneo, the UAAP title-holder, meets West Negros University at 4 p.m.

On Nov. 13, Saint Francis of Assisi battles University of Mindanao at 2 p.m. while College of St. Benilde meets Las Piñas College.

And on Nov. 17, University of Visayas, with coach Elmer Cabahug, tests Jose Rizal University at 1 p.m., while University of the East meets University of San Jose-Recoletos.

Sponsored by Petron, San Miguel Corporation, Hapee, adidas and PLDT, the quarterfinals will be on Nov. 19 and 20 and the semifinals on Nov. 24. Game One of the best-of-three championship series is on Nov. 26, with a Game Three set on Dec. 1, if necessary.

Organizers, led by Commissioner Ramon Fernandez and leaue chair Joe Lipa, met with the athletic directors and coaches of the participating teams yesterday and vowed to join hands in making this tournament, sanctioned by the Basketball Association of the Philippines, a big success.

"I believe this tournament should really be the culminating event of all the collegiate tournaments in the country," said Fernandez, the PBA's first four-time most valuable player.

He also announced that an MVP, a Coach of the Year and a Mythical Five selection will be chosen.

$3-M Breeders' Cup bet probed

NEW YORK—A third person is being investigated as part of a probe into a suspicious Breeders' Cup bet worth $3 million, the Thoroughbred Times reported Tuesday.

Don Groth, president of the Catskill Region Off-Track Betting Corporation, turned over the name to authorities, the industry publication reported on its Web site. The person was not identified.

Already being investigated are Derrick Davis, who hopes to claim the $3 million, and Chris Harn, a software engineer fired last week by Autotote, the company that processes wagers for Catskill OTB.

Davis and the third person are Harn's friends, Groth said.

"The other name is an account holder we had been studying prior to Breeders' Cup day," Groth told the Thoroughbred Times. *AP*

Negros soccer Nov. 9

DUMAGUETE CITY—Bais City High goes up against San Miguel Provincial Community High when the Negros Oriental Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football tournament unwraps on Nov. 9 at the Silliman University field here.

Ten other teams, led by defending champion Negros Oriental High, are vying in the tourney sponsored by Coca-Cola with adidas as official ball.

The other contenders are Sibulan Municipal High, Dumaguete City High, Camanjac National High, St. Paul College (High School), Ramon Teves Pastor Memorial, Colegio de Sta. Catalina de Alejandria, St. Louis School-Don Bosco, Silliman University High and Foundational University High.

Gov. George P. Arnaiz and Dumaguete Mayor Agustin R. Perdices will be guests of honor during the opening ceremony.

Also gracing the opening rites are Philippine Football Federation deputy general secretary Domeka Garamendi and Negros Oriental Football Association president Ernesto Ravello.

Oliver attends funeral

MELBOURNE—Jockey Damien Oliver attended the funeral of his brother on Wednesday, less than 24 hours after winning Australia's biggest horse race.

Oliver flew out of Melbourne on Wednesday morning to join his family in Perth for the funeral of his older brother Jason, who was killed after falling from a horse last week.

A day earlier, Oliver won the Melbourne Cup on Irish gelding Media Puzzle in what was one of the most emotional days in Australian sport.

Wearing his dead brother's riding pants and with tears streaming down his face, Oliver gave an emotional account of the pain he was suffering. *Reuters*

Nets face Bucks; Mavs vs Raptors

THE NEW Jersey Nets and the Dallas Mavericks, two of only three remaining undefeated teams in the NBA this season, take centerstage today (Thursday, Nov. 7) in a double-header from Solar Entertainment Corporation.

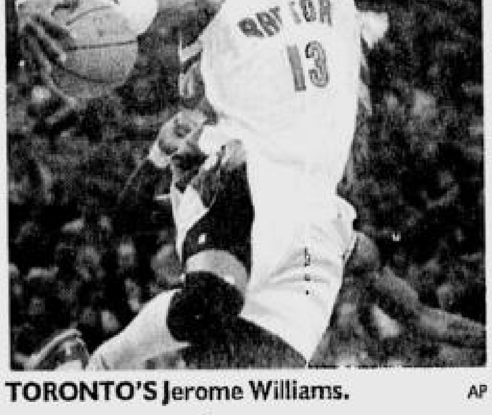
The Nets battle the Milwaukee Bucks live at 10:30 a.m. on the Solar Sports Network (Channel 29 on Skycable/Homecable, replay at 9:30 p.m.), while the Mavericks face the Toronto Raptors at 7 p.m. on IBC-13.

The reigning NBA Eastern Conference champion Nets, winners of their first four games, try to match their best-ever start to an NBA season with a win today.

Jason Kidd has been sensational, averaging a double-double for the Nets (13.9 points and a team-best 10.2 assists) and leading the team in rebounds (7.8/game). High-flying sophomore Richard Jefferson leads the team in points (17.3/game) and has averaged 69 percent shooting from the floor (29-of-42).

Picking up where they left off last season, the Mavericks are once again the NBA's highest scoring team. Six Mavs average double-digits in scoring, led by the Big Three of Michael Finley (19.0 points/game), Steve Nash (19.5) and Dirk Nowitzki (21.5). Nick Van Exel (14.5), Eduardo Najera (12.0) and Raef LaFrentz (10.0) have contributed heavily in their three wins.

Nowitzki has showcased his all-around skills, leading the team in points and rebounds (8.0/game) and is second in assists (5.0/game).


TORONTO'S Jerome Williams. AP

RACING TIPS

AT SAN LAZARO BY MR. 999

Race 1–1. Mighty Strong 2. Chief Navigator

Race 2–1. Simply Great 2. Silver Dollar 3. Tanging Ikaw

Race 3–1. Fearless Vixen 2. Sarangani Dancer 3. Dalia 4. Misty 5. Mutya ng Nayon

Race 4–1. Ichiro 2. Wing Commander 3. Lady Witty 4. Always

Race 5–1. Sensational/Bumper to Bumper 2. Cherry Lane 3. Red Rose 4. Golden Indy

Race 6–1. Sun Chief 2. G Square 3. Enseguida

Race 7–1. With Distinction 2. Scream 3. Gentleman's Copy 4. Talk to Patsy

Race 8–1. Yes Sir 2. Shuttle's Magic 3. Asunta de Rio

Race 9–1. Patutina 2. May's Magic 3. Scream for Chance 4. Race for Gold 5. Mr. Positive 6. Sir Olizon

FIRST GENTLEMAN CUP

Sinfuego grabs lead; Que cut

QUE

The scores:
139 - R. Sinfuego 70-69 (33-36)
140 - R. Pactolerin 68-72 (35-37), M. Pucay 72-68 (34-34), D. Zarate 72-68 (33-35)
141 - R. Cuello 74-67 (33-34)
142 - C. Casas 72-70 (34-36), B. Magada 71-71 (35-36), V.Santia 72-70 (35-35), R. Sasutil 72-70 (35-35)
143 - C. Ababa 72-71 (36-35), D. Cruz 69-75 (34-41), M. Dizon 71-72 (36-36)
144--Ardimer, Rodolfo 71-73 (36-37)
Bagtas, Eduardo 72-72 (37-35)
Balan, Anthony 70-74 (35-39)
Lascuna, Antonio 73-71 (35-360
145--Delos Santos, Danilo 69-76 (36-40)
Eso, Melvin 72-73 (33-40)
Salvador, Elmer 73-72 (36-36)
Villaroman, Carito 69-76 (39-37)
146--Cado, Jose Antonio 74-72 (33-39)
eso, Armando 76-70 (35-35)
Miñosa, Peter 75-71 (33-38)
Sanchez, Demitrio 73-73 (36-37)
147--Marcelo, Enrico 75-72 (37-35)

By Jong Arcano

CANLUBANG–Forced to a half swing by throbbing pains from a bad back, Richard Sinfuego survived an agonizing day with a three-under-par 69 to grab the lead at the halfway mark of the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit leg at the Canlubang North.

Sinfuego got his tee-shots all astray in the first four holes but still made pars before uncorking a three-birdie barrage coming home in an astounding effort that got him shaking his head in amazement as he signed his bogey-less scorecard.

But the 31-year-old Sinfuego needs more effort to stave off the challenge of 11 foes who are within four strokes or less of the lead.

At 139, Sinfuego was a stroke ahead of Robert Pactolerin, Mars Pucay and Danny Zarate while Rodrigo Cuello (141) and Cassius Casas (142) were likewise in the hunt for the P100,000 champion's purse offered in the tourney presented by San Miguel Beer with the support of WG&A Super Ferry.

Zarate knocked in five birdies in a row from the third to match the 68 turned in by Pucay.

Pactolerin wavered early with three straight bogeys but hung tough to match par and stay in the running.

Nobody collected more birdies in another day of low-scoring than Rodrigo Cuello who had seven in shooting the day's best of 67.

But the day's equally big story was Angelo Que.

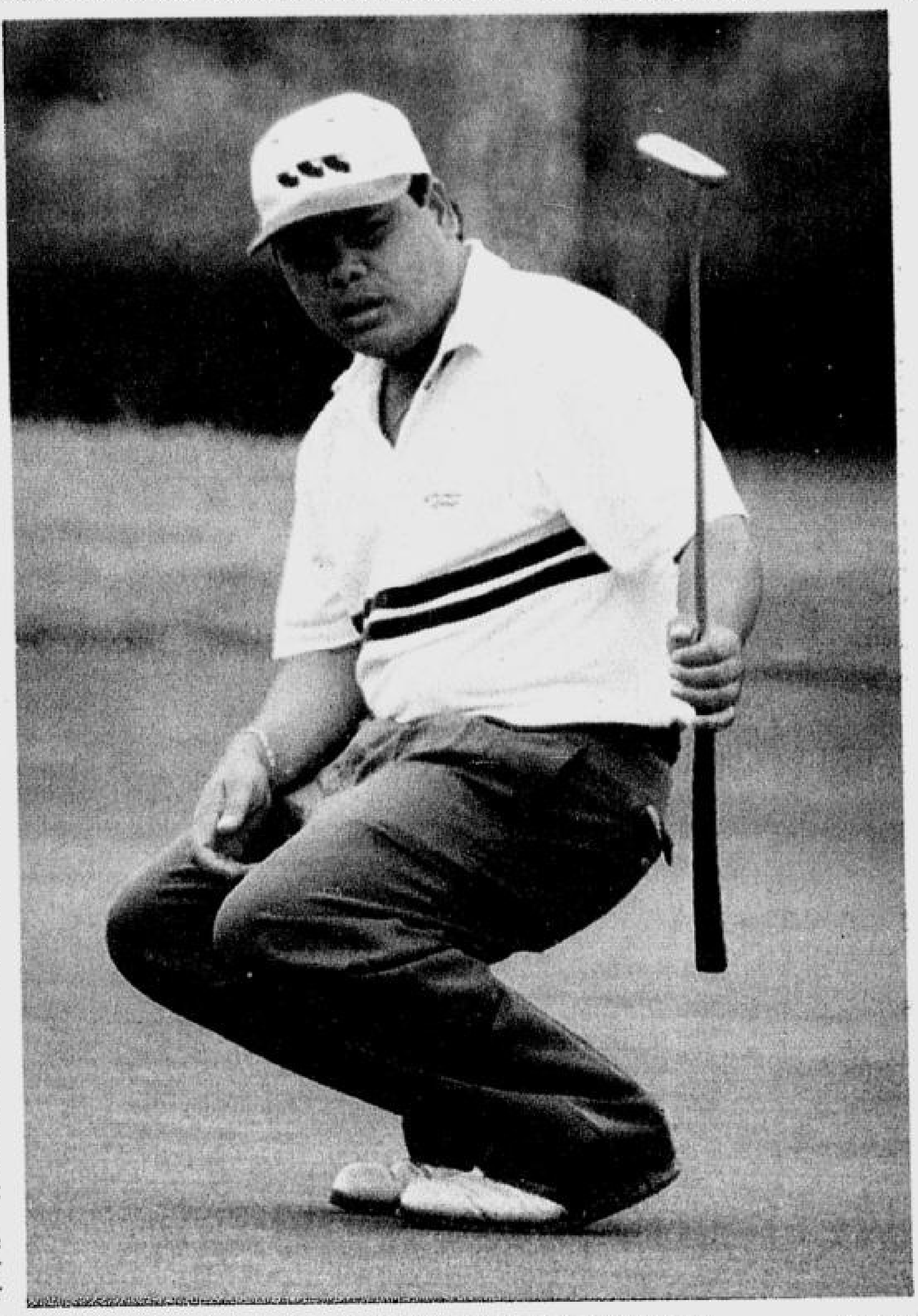
The amateur sensation's pro debut proved disastrous as the national team standout missed the cut after a 73-148 in a big letdown after shining bright in his farewell stint in Malaysia two weeks ago.

Dan Cruz, the co-leader with Pactolerin in Round 1, could only score a 75 and slipped to a tie for 10th at 143.

"Hindi ako makapaniwala na natapos akong walang bogey, *sa sama ng palo pa-*cutoff *talaga iyon. Milagro na lang,"* said Sinfuego who sought the help of a therapist as soon as he got out of the clubhouse.

On the par-5 No. 2, another of his bad half swings had him hitting a coconut tree and left him with a second shot from the ladies tee. He got back to the fairway with a 3-wood before an incredible 3-wood third shot set him up for a three-foot birdie.

That set the tone for his three-birdie barrage where he made a four-footer on the tough third hole and another from the same distance on the treacherous No.3 off a 6-iron tee-shot.



SINFUEGO: Amazingly bucks a sore back in scoring his bogey-less round. PDI PHOTO

Peping paces q'fiers

FORMER Rep. Peping Cojuangco and hotelier-sportsman Biboy Enriquez lead the qualifiers in today's Luzon Gamecock Breeders Association 2nd Stag Series 2002 6-Stag Derby championship round at the Mandaluyong Coliseum beginning at 6 p.m. Some 70 fights are on tap.

Entries CAT Stinger JBB of Cojuangco and Firebird of Enriquez posted two victories each in last Tuesday's elimination, re-affirming their stellar billing in a tough cast of Luzon breeders.

Also with two points are Edmund Yasay (Wild Harvester), Luis Villa (Hermosa), Justice Magdangal Elma (Banahaw Altuz I), Bobby Balberoon (Don Salvador II), Manuel Lui (Great Wall I), Gil Nicolas (632 Gamefarm III), Blandy Tolentino (San Pablo Heat II), Edwin Aranez and Bobby Campos (Red), Maj. Bobby Doromal (Buddy and Bob I), Danny Pineda and Boots Yap (SJ Blue Mountain Farm), Joey Mendoza (Buenas Dias Tagapo), R. Tan (Jopete Black Stallion III), Ayong Lorenzo (EDL Crowsland Excellence II) and Jay de Jesus (DJ Alliance).

Backing up the derby are sponsors Pit Fighter Feeds and Washout Shampoo from Lakpue Drug, Thunderbird Enertone, Amtyl 500 of Excellence Gamefowl Specialists and Derby Ace from San Miguel Feeds.

Meanwhile, the "3rd LGBA Stag Series 2002 6-Stag Derby" is all set next Tuesday and Thursday, Nov. 12 and 14. Interested parties may contact 531-4003, 531-4005, 535-2341 and 524-4110 for details.

CLARK CENTENNIAL

Beach volleyball favorites barge into semifinals

By Dennis U. Eroa

CLARK, Pampanga–The favorites played true to form as highly-ranked Thailand I and 2 and Indonesia I posted convincing wins yesterday to enter the semifinals of the First Clark Centennial Cup Asian women's beach volleyball championship at the Clearwater Country Club here.

And Philippines 2, bannered by Helen Dosdos and Cecille Tabuena, nearly recorded a gigantic upset when it took away the first set from the Japanese duo of Satoko Urata and Sanae Tsubakimoto before losing, 15-21, 21-17, 15-6, in front of an appreciative crowd.

Busan Asiad fourth placers Kamolthip Kulna and Juranee Sanok of Thailand 2 opened their bid for the $3,000 champions' purse by beating Indonesia 2, 21-17, 21-13. The Thais returned in the afternoon to whip Dosdos and Tabuena, 21-8, 21-13.

Manatsanan Pangka and Arlaisuk Ratanaporn of Thailand I dominated Vietnam, 21-10, 21-14 and the Sarah Fay Luna/Jennifer Bohawe duo of Philippines I, 21-9, 21-13.

Indonesia I of Atlanta Olympics veteran Nurjanah Sitti and Yudhani Ni Puti ripped Philippines I, 21-13, 21-11 and Vietnam, 21-14, 21-10.

With two straight losses, the two Philippine teams are already out of the running for the four semifinals berths. The semis will be held today.

Sponsoring the event are Gatorade, Speedo, Globe, Absolute, PSC, PAL and CDC. AYN Sports management organized the event.

The tournament opened with Emmanuel Angeles, president and CEO of Clark Development Corporation, giving the main address.

Other guests were Commissioner Butch Ramirez, representing PSC chair Eric Buhain; Rizalino Navarro, chair of the CDC; Rep. Jesli Lapuz, Mayor Marino "Boking" Morales and C/Supt. Oscar Calderon, PNP regional director; Maximo Sangil, director of the CDC Public Affairs & Community Relations Committee; Clearwater Resort chair Denny Wang; general manager David de Padua; AYN president Chito Narvasa; and, Sonny Lopez, head of Clark's Public Affairs Office.

Also present were leading officials of the Philippine Amateur Volleyball Association headed by Louie Gepuela and Tonyboy Liao.

Clark chaplain Fr. Raffy de la Cruz gave the invocation, while the 600th Air Base Wing Honor Guards led the entrance of colors.

Tanny Gonzales, AYN Project Director, emceed the short but meaningful opening ceremonies which was attended by the eight competing teams.

Golf, triathlon new Batang Pinoy events

By Marc Anthony Reyes

BATANG Pinoy, the nationwide multi-sports event for kids 12 years old and younger, has included new disciplines in its calendar, including golf and triathlon, when it unreels Dec. 1-7 in Puerto Princesa, Palawan.

This was bared yesterday by the organizing Philippine Sports Commission, which will bankroll the annual Games which was created four years ago with the aim to maximize the agency's grassroots development program.

Also to be introduced in this year's staging of the Youth games are weightlifting, wrestling and athletics and swimming for the differently-abled children.

These events will be included in the original lineup of events like arnis, athletics, badminton, baseball, boxing, chess, dancesports, football, gymnastics, judo, karatedo, lawn tennis, softball, swimming, table tennis, taekwondo and volleyball.

Some 3,500 athletes and officials are expected to grace the event which marks the first time that Palawan will host a big sporting event.

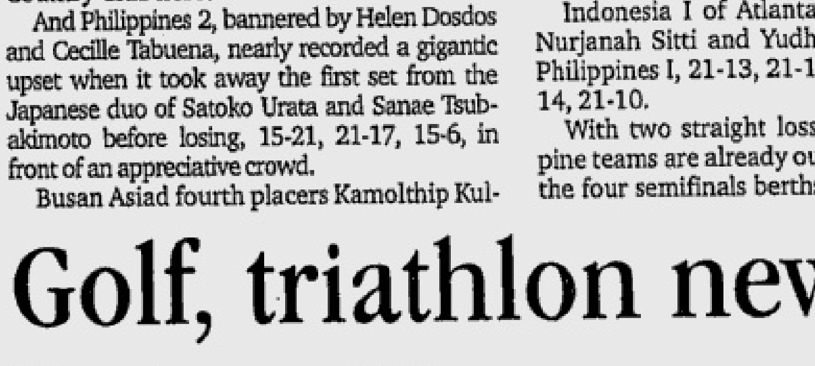
So far, at least 2,000 delegates from 49 local government units have confirmed their participation.

PSC officials have already conducted inspection in the Puerto Princesa Sports Complex and added that schoolhouses are also being readied to house the delegates.

Deadline for submission of entries is set for Nov. 19, with more than 1,000 delegates from Mindanao likely to list up.

Manila ruled the third staging of the Batang Pinoy in Bacolod City through its swimmers and taekwondo-jins, besting Laguna which has ruled the event the 1999 and 2000 editions of the Games.

With the addition of new events, Manila again looms as favorites because of its wide-based youth sports program headed by Ali Atienza, chief of the Manila Sports Council. Cebu, Laguna and Bacolod, however, remain as the strong contenders for the overall title.



Mabuhay MILES
It all adds up ... its across the mile

PAL MABUHAY GOLF

Philippine Airlines has joined hands with two of the country's leading auto distributors to launch the Mabuhay Miles Elite Invitational Golf Tournament set for tomorrow at Wack Wack, with over 200 members of the country's business elite paticipating. Auto Prominence Corp. will award an Audi A4 1.8 automatic luxury sedan while Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. will present a Toyota Camry 2.0E to the player who cards a hole-in-one. Shown are (left to right) Federico de Guzman of Auto Prominence; Joy Lynn Pasiliao, PAL assistant vice president for products; and Jon Hechanova of Toyota.

Indian prevails

INDIAN Sania Mirza and Chinese Dong Yan-Hua scored contrasting victories yesterday to reach the second round of the US$10,000 Union Cement-ITF Philippines Women's Circuit 1 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Mirza, ranked No. 833 in the world, eliminated fourth seed and compatriot Sonal Phadke, 6-1, 6-3.

Reason for wailing

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

WE wail because we can win gold medals in bowling, golf and marathon in the Vietnam SEA Games next year. We wail because said disciplines have not been included in the 2003 calendar.

What's wrong with wailing if the reason for wailing is with merit?

Sometimes, I can't understand us anymore.

Golf boss Rod Feliciano and bowling head Steve Hontiveros have protested the scrapping of their disciplines.

They deserve our praise, for they have the interest of flag and country at heart–golf and bowling being consistent medal-producers in the region's sporting event.

The Vietnamese can't claim that both disciplines are Greek to them. There are golf courses and bowling alleys in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh, hosts of the 2003 SEA Games.

Go Teng Kok has protested the scrapping of marathon. He should be commended. He is the country's track and field chief. If he had not raised a howl, I would have recommended that he be nailed to the cross. Filipino marathoners swept both gold medals in the 2001 Kuala Lumpur SEA Games.

The Vietnamese can't say marathon is Greek to them. They regularly hold a Hanoi International Marathon, with San Miguel Beer a major sponsor at that.

I heard Cito Dayrit, the country's Olympic chief, say over dzSports Radio yesterday that he had appealed for the reinstatement of bowling, golf and marathon.

"As chair of the SEA Games Federation," Cito told program hosts Ric Yap Santos and Cecille Quimlat, "I wrote the hosts a letter of appeal on behalf of bowling and golf. In the case of marathon, I wrote the appeal in my capacity as president of the Philippine Olympic Committee."

For those efforts, Cito also deserves our applause.

"I have a hunch they might yet include the three events," he said. "The deadline for the final list of events to be contested next year is on Dec. 5. Let us hope and pray that they see the light of day."

Sometimes, we are really a funny race. We often complain about our failure to win gold medals overseas. But when we see potential gold medals going down the drain even before they are to be contested, we hit the person trying to save those medals.

The Christians of old Rome wailed when they were pitted against lions. That was also quite a reason for wailing.

Tan Ho defeats Baldonado

SECOND seed Joshua Tan Ho defeated Joseph Baldonado, 6-1, 6-0, last weekend to lead the boys' 12-under quarterfinalists in the PCA Open Juniors Tennis Championships at the PCA outdoor clay courts.

In other matches, Mark Balce downed Rodel Navarro, 6-1, 7-5, Edwin Olivarez Jr., outclassed Homer Perez, 6-1, 6-1, James Murrell blasted Raymarc Santiago, 6-0, 6-0, Patrick Arevalo beat Julius Lagman, 6-1, 6-1, Jeffrey Villanueva demolished John Rey Litan, 6-0, 6-0, and Gerard Michael Ngo struggled past Aiko Sy, 6-1, 1-6, 6-2.

Gaining quarterfinal slots in the unisex 10-under class were Joan Opulencia, who scored a 6-2, 6-2, win over Marco Verano, Sarah Jane Lim, who beat ma. Regina Santiago, 6-1, 6-1, and Juan Gabriel Pena, a 6-4, 6-1 winner over Johan Marie Altiche.

In other results, Pablo Olivarez Jr. defeated Jaryd Manduriao, 6-3, 6-0 and Russell Arcilla Jr. dumped Isaac Sabas, 6-0, 6-1, to enter the boys' 14-under division of this event supported by Dunlop, Accel, Coca Cola, Trans Asia, Las Palmas, Photokina, Equitable-PCI, FedEx and Chowking.

Also advancing were Ogie Reynoso, Bryan Dayleg, Daniel Macalino, Mikoff Manduriao, Johnwill Baldonado, Jose Opulencia, Martin Ramos, Christopher Ensomo, Brian Lontok, James Murrell and Gerard Michael Ngo.

STUNNING DEVELOPMENT

PBA hands coverage rights to NBN-IBC

By June Navarro

ALEJO

BERNARDINO

THE PBA board of governors yesterday awarded the league's broadcasting rights to the joint television venture of National Broadcasting Network and Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation.

The NBN-IBC partnership of NBN's Mia Concio and Ed Finlan (IBC) bested the group led by Bobong Velez, Republic Flour Mills top honcho Joey Concepcion, Bobby Barreiro and Choy Cojuangco.

As the official carrier of the PBA games, NBN-IBC has pledged P670 million to the league to be paid in the next three years.

NBN-IBC will have to shell out P200 million next year, P220 million in 2004 before spending P250 million on its final year of commitment.

The Velez group committed almost P600 million in a bid to seize the PBA broadcasting rights but the board decided that the proposal of the NBN-IBC combination is the "best deal for the league."

"Don't get the impression that the board picked NBN-IBC over the Velez group just because of monetary concerns. Both proposals have their merits and the board decided on what's best for the league," said PBA Commissioner Jun Bernardino, who spoke in behalf of the board.

Bernardino said the board got enticed with the NBN-IBC proposal because of its promise to give the PBA games a wider reach and the group's vast television experience.

Bernardino also said there is a possibility that the games will be aired over NBN-4 and IBC-13 simultaneously.

Bernardino said the PBA and the NBN-IBC will have to discuss first the repercussions of airing the games on two TV channels.

The appointment of NBN-IBC signaled the end for Viva-Vintage, which reportedly still has arrears of close to P200 million.

After thorough deliberations yesterday at the PBA offices, Bernardino said PBA chair Francisco "Butch" Alejo was the one who broke the news to the Velez group and Viva-Vintage.

"With this new partnership, the PBA board looks forward to more exciting seasons of the PBA, the premier basketball league in the country," said Bernardino.

Esplana, Jackson shine as Shell wins

GAMES TOMORROW *(Cuneta Astrodome)*
5:30 p.m.—Alaska vs FedEx
7:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Ginebra

By June Navarro

SHELL Velocity bucked Talk N Text's height advantage to pull off a 67-64 victory and enter the win-column last night in the Selecta-PBA All Filipino Cup at the Cuneta Astrodome.

But what made the Turbo Chargers' win possible after two miserable defeats was the awesome crunchtime plays of Gerry Esplana, who summoned his vintage form when nobody seemed to bail them out of trouble.

Esplana, a 13-year veteran who led the Turbo Chargers in the 1999 All-Filipino Cup, converted on a fallaway jumper with 23 ticks left that doomed the Phone Pals.

"What can I say? He's (Esplana) shining again in the twilight of his career. That's why he's been here in the league for a long time," said Shell coach Perry Ronquillo.

Ronquillo, however, pointed to defensive specialist Chris Jackson as the man who inspired and motivated the Turbo Chargers to overcome the Phone Pals.

Jackson, a two-time PBA press corps defensive player of the year, allowed Asi Taulava to get away with 30 points but made the crucial stops in the end.

Taulava got stymied by Jackson as he flubbed a point-blank shot in the last 41 seconds that could have trimmed a 65-62 gap.

In the second game, Davonn Harp shone as Batang Red Bull ripped Sta. Lucia Realty, 66-58, to remain unbeaten after three games.

Scores:

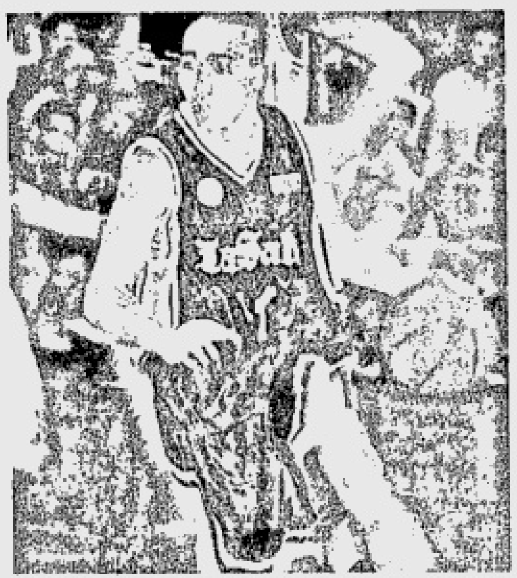
SHELL 67—Calaguio 31, Del Rosario 11, Jackson 8, Esplana 8, Marzan 8, Wainwright 5, Singson 4, Bacani 4, Dela Cruz 0, Hrabak 0.

TALK N TEXT 64—Taulava 30, Evans 9, Pablo 8, Camaso 6, Belano 6, Demape 3, Gonzales 2, Fran 0, Crisano 0, Lago 0, Cui 0.

Quarters: 15-12, 33-30, 48-all, 67-64.

Cortez wants to lead La Salle again

By Dennis U. Eroa


CORTEZ: "One more chance, please." PDI PHOTO

HARDLY bothered by ugly rumors blaming him for La Salle's loss in this year's UAAP basketball finals, Mike "Cool Cat" Cortez hinted that he would like to play one more year for the Green Archers to "vindicate himself."

The six-footer Cortez, easily the UAAP's most talented playmaker, came under heavy criticisms after his so-so show during the Ateneo-La Salle decider before an overflowing crowd at the Araneta Coliseum.

Cortez, however, voiced his desire to suit up anew for La Salle in radio and TV interviews after the recent Bantay Bata UAAP-NCAA showdown won by University of the East.

It wasn't clear, however, whether Cortez is still eligible to play one more season for the Archers in the UAAP.

Playing uninspired basketball, the Green Archers did not figure prominently in the showdown. Coach Franz Pumaren also hardly fielded in Cortez.

Cortez was obviously hurt after the Green Archers, only a win away from the 14-game sweep in the double-round eliminations, got beaten by rival Ateneo in the best-of-three series that proved to be the year's much-talked about sporting event.

Basketball pundits, however, doubt Cortez's sincerity because it is common knowledge that he has set his eyes on joining the 2003 PBA draft.

Nevertheless, La Salle bigwigs have already cleared Cortez of any wrongdoings in the series, and instead included him in the ICTSI-La Salle's lineup in the ongoing PBL Challenge Cup.

Ateneo, the Chairman's Cup titlist, begged off this conference, denying the league a chance to have an Ateneo-La Salle encounter.

Cortez's bid in the draft depends a lot on his performance in the PBL because PBA scouts will be very busy watching games and see if the Cool Cat can still play with the same deadly efficiency.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY In 1993, Mario Manubay shot a 3-under-par 67 to capture the Philip Morris Bacolod Golf Classic at the Negros Occidental Golf and Country Club in Bacolod City. Also today in 1993, Stella Unson topped the 24-step Taijiquan and 42-step Taijiquan events in the Wushu Federation of the Philippines national individual tournament at the WFPI gym in Juan Luna.

SPORTSTV

Compiled by L. Manguiat

GOLF: LPGA Tournament of Champions, 9 a.m. (r), ESPN

The Tour Championship, 2 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. (r), Star Sports

BILLIARDS: Asian 8-Ball Championships 2002, 12:30 a.m. (r), Star Sports

BOXING: Fight Time on Fox 2002, 8:30 p.m., Star Sports

POOL: World Pool Masters 2002, 2 p.m. (r), ESPN

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Cheeseballs/Shark takes on Sunkist in PBL

GAMES TODAY *(Makati Coliseum)*
3 p.m.—Cheeseballs/Shark vs Sunkist
5 p.m.—Dazz vs ICTSI-La Salle

By Dennis U. Eroa

TWO-TIME Challenge Cup champion Cheeseballs/Shark meets Sunkist, while Dazz battles ICTSI-La Salle today in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

Jing Ruiz, Leo Austria's former assistant, will have his baptism of fire as head coach of Cheeseballs/Shark which is favored to debut strongly against Sunkist, whose core is composed mostly of players from the University of the East.

Gametime between Cheeseballs/Shark and Sunkist is set at 3 p.m., followed by the 5 p.m. clash between Dazz and ICTSI-La Salle.

ICTSI-La Salle has recruited ace playmaker Dino Aldeguer, Reynell Hugnatan and the acrobatic Bruce Dacia in a bid to win its first PBL title.

The winners will join Welcoat Paints and LBC-Batangas in the winning column. Ruiz, an ex-pro, will be assisted by Dayong Mendoza, who is also an assistant coach of the Letran varsity team.

Cheeseballs/Shark bolstered its lineup by getting former Cebuano star Stephen Padilla and Rey Mendoza, a 6-foot-4 standout from the National University.

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Pastor 1st Pinoy Formula champion

PASTOR

RACER Enzo Pastor recently captured the 2002 Asian Formula Renault Championship to become the first Filipino to win a major international Formula car racing series in recent memory.

Not since the late Jovy Marcelo qualified for the United States Formula Atlantic Championships in the '80s has there been a Filipino who made such an impact in auto racing.

Pastor has received an invitation to see action in the Macau Grand Prix, where he will attempt to become the first Filipino to win the event since the late Arsenio "Dodjie" Laurel back in the '60s.

Pastor's triumph came on the heels of the successful staging of the two legs of the 2002 Asian Formula Challenge in Batangas and Subic.

The 2002 Asian Formula Challenge managed to hold its 14 races and seven legs in China, Malaysia and Philippines, capped by a fitting finale at the Subic International Raceway on Oct. 27.

Veteran Mark Goddard, a Briton based in the Philippines, won the Subic event.

The Asian Formula 3 Corporation has forged an agreement with Colby Ventures to stage the Philippine legs of the 2002 Asian Formula Challenge, Asia's first truly international championship for Formula 3 and Formula Renault cars.

The objective of the series was to create an avenue for Asian drivers and Filipinos to showcase their talent and bring them closer to Formula 1, the world's most prestigious motor racing championship.

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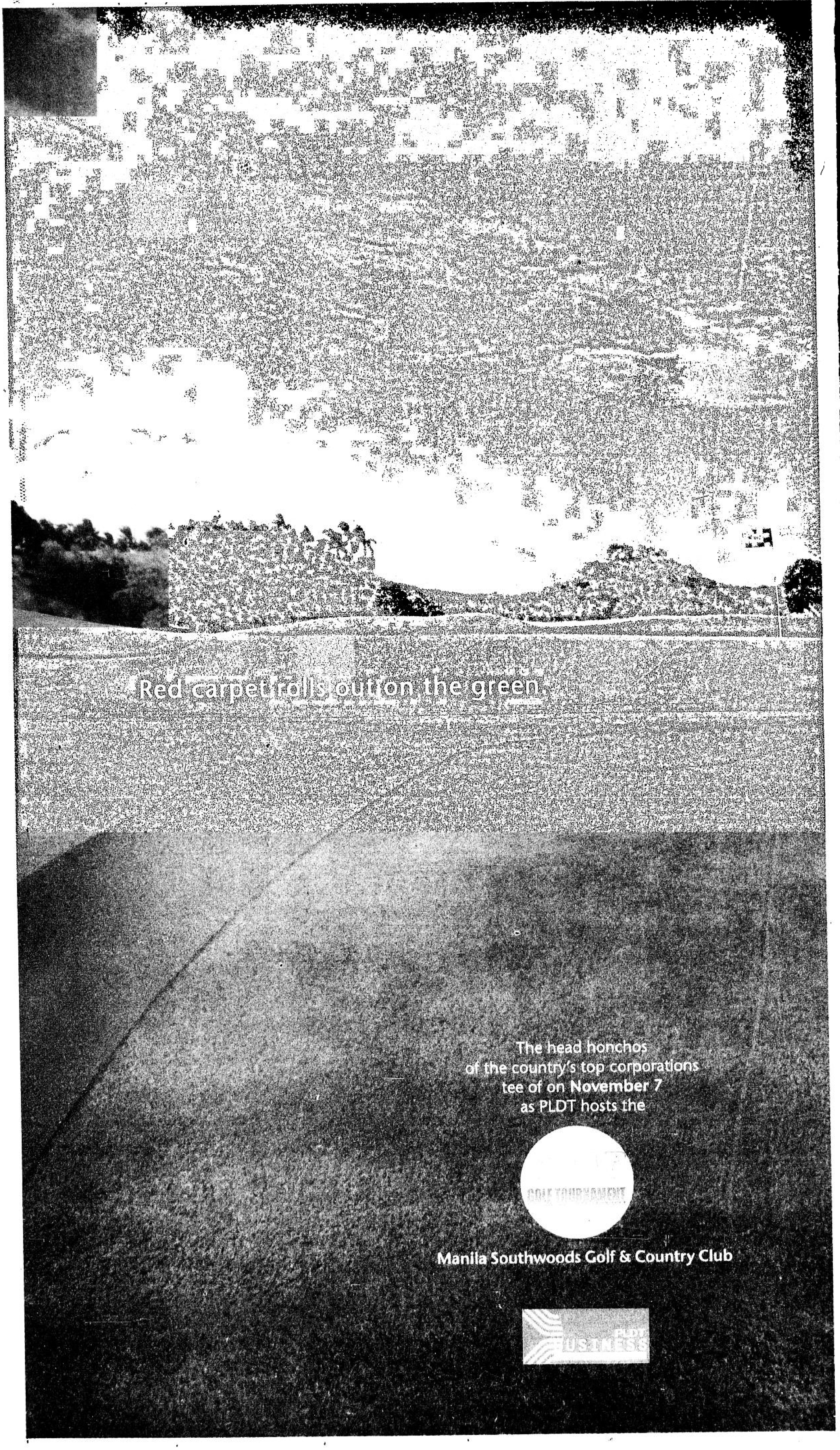
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Editor Louie C. Camino

Explain where P2B went, BF told

By Tina Santos

VALENZUELA City Rep. Magtanggol "Magi" Gunigundo is threatening to cut the budget of the Metro Manila Development Authority unless MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando gives an account of how the agency spent its P2-billion budget.

"(Fernando) has a lot of explaining to do, as far as the MMDA budget is concerned," said Gunigundo, of District II.

The congressman, who has been pushing for the abolition of the MMDA, yesterday vowed to scrutinize its budget, which he described as "too much for an agency without tangible accomplishment."

He added that he wants to replace the MMDA with a coordinating body without budget which he would call the National Capital Region Devel-

EXPLAIN/ A22

'Nov. 1 raid crippled drug ring'

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE ALL Saints' Day raid of a sophisticated shabu laboratory in Parañaque City may have crippled the operations of a China-based drug syndicate in Metro Manila, police said.

Chief Supt. Jose Gutierrez, Southern Police District director, yesterday said the discovery of the laboratory dealt a big blow to the operations of the Hong Kong Triad.

"I can't imagine the bulk (of shabu) being manufactured there," Gutierrez told the INQUIRER. "The raid definitely greatly reduced the supply of shabu being supplied in the country."

Interior Secretary Jose Lina had described the raid as far bigger than those conducted on shabu laboratories in San Juan and Quezon City a few months ago.

Gutierrez arrived at his conclusion following a series of tactical interrogations on Bin Xu Zi, 30, who had been arrested hours before police barged into the mansion on Hemlock Street, Executive Heights Village in Barangay Sun Valley.

There is a "big possibility" that the Hong Kong Triad was behind the laboratory since the chemicals seized were not locally produced, Gutierrez said.

NOV. 1/A22

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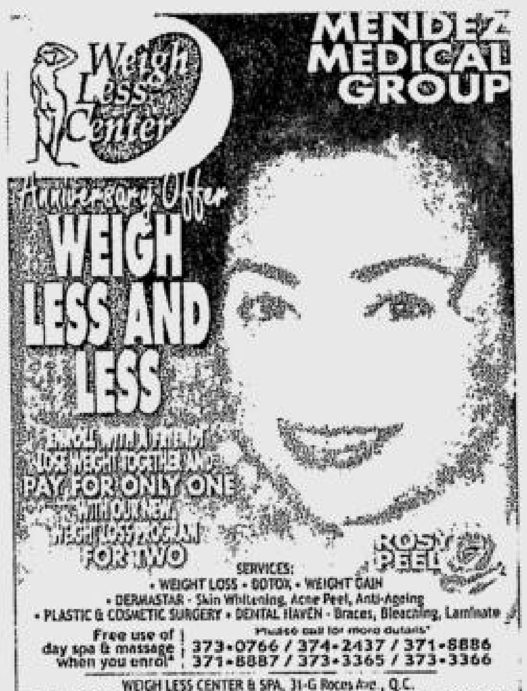
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'Nov. 1 raid crippled drug ring'

From page A21

But the SPD chief refused to elaborate on the interrogation to avoid compromising police investigation.

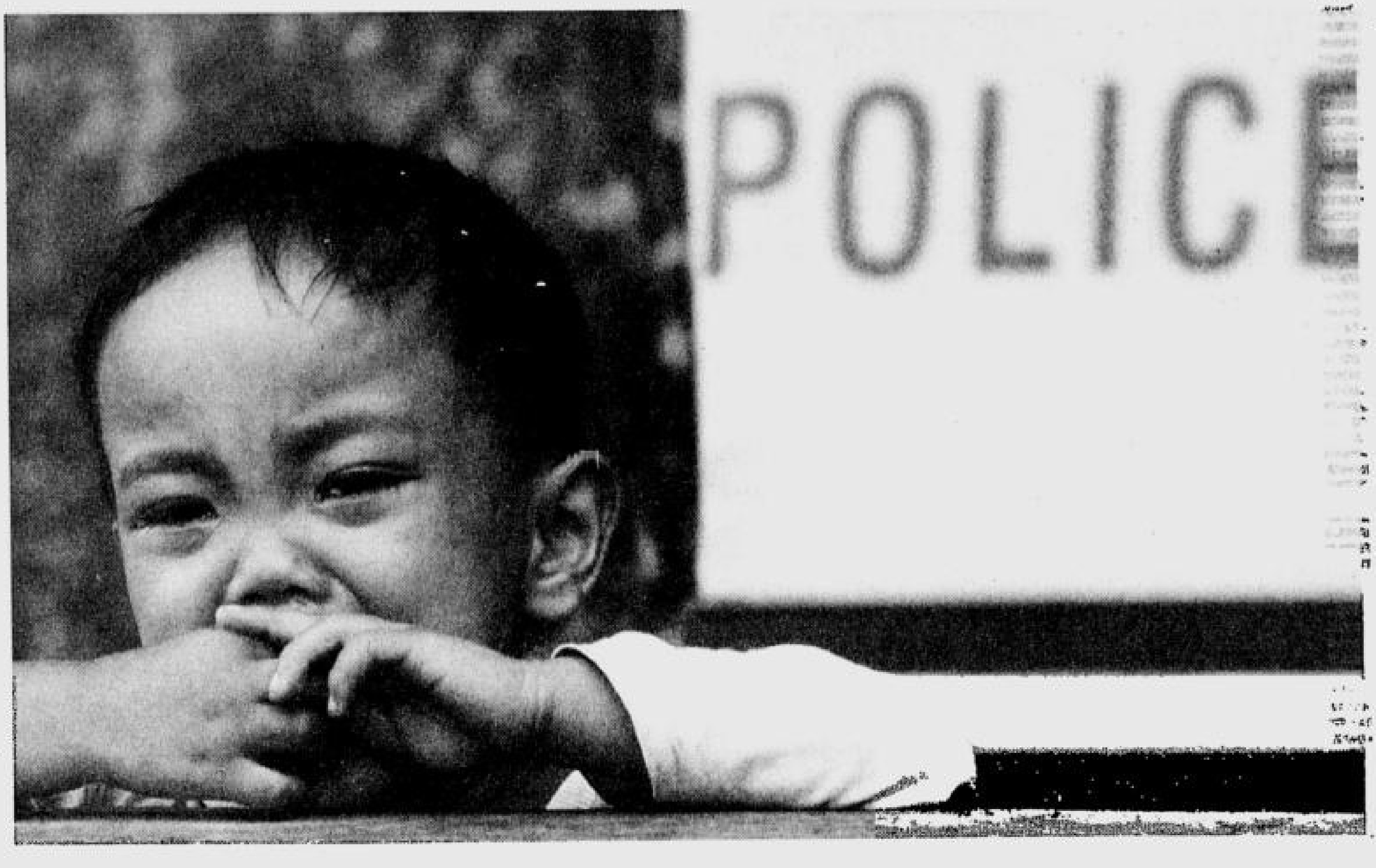
"For all we know, (Bin) may just be misleading police, that's why we don't believe everything that he says," he said.

Gutierrez yesterday asked the Immigration Bureau to step into the investigation after police found out that Bin is an undocumented alien.

He also wants to know the real identity of the Mr. and Mrs. Lee tagged by Bin as the ones who rented the Hemlock mansion said to belong to Teddy Monasterio.

Aside from the drug laboratory, police are zeroing in on the Sun Valley areas of Cherry East and Culdesac, where the large-scale distribution of shabu are said to be carried out.

Gutierrez said a former member of the Narcotics Command could be involved in the illegal drug operations there.



PEOPLE UNDER THE STAIRS
This unhappy 2-year-old boy is part of a family that has been living under the stairs of the Central Police District Station 10 in Quezon City for three years now. His father is an errand boy at the station, his mother a domestic helper. What will this boy be when he grows up?

JOAN BONDOC

Arming watchmen opposed

By Jerome Aning

THE MANILA City council on Monday passed a resolution strongly opposing any attempt to arm barangay watchmen in the city.

All the councilors agreed that arming barangay watchmen would pose a security threat in the capital.

The resolution's author, minority leader Don Ramon Bagatsing, said the councilors feel that arming watchmen is not the solution to, nor will it help solve the terrorist bombings.

The councilors said the watchmen lack the necessary training to carry firearms.

"It takes years of proper training and a number of physical and psychological tests before a person is deemed fit to carry a licensed firearm," according to the resolution.

It added that "good intelligence from law enforcement officers is the solution" to terrorism.

Each of the city's 897 barangay has 15 to 20 watchmen.

If plans to arm them would be implemented, then 13,000 to 18,000 gun-carrying watchmen would be roaming Manila's streets, according to Bagatsing.

This is in addition to the 3,000 armed city policemen and some 3,000 Manila residents licensed to carry firearms, he said.

The 4th district aldermen said that not only watchmen but also the chairs and councilmen who make up the barangay council should be used as a "grassroots intelligence network."

The city council said barangay officials who give useful intelligence to the proper authorities should instead be given monetary reward and additional benefits by the government.

'No terrorist activities in Manila'

By Philip Tubeza

"HAS AN American been killed by terrorists in Manila?"

Western Police District Director Senior Supt. Pedro Bulaong threw this question as he maintained that the capital was safe for foreign tourists.

"What I'm trying to say is that there are no terrorist activities here in Manila," Bulaong said. "We've done our best to prevent that."

But the police chief declined to comment on the report from the National Capital Region Police Office that there was a "credible" terrorist threat in Metro Manila.

Bulaong said the WPD has not been informed about that threat, adding that media might have just exaggerated the reports.

Since the Bali bombings in Indonesia, the Manila police have been on red alert to prevent terrorist attacks, particularly in the tourist district.

Lawmen in the capital have been on the edge after the bus bombing in Balintawak, Quezon City last month where two persons were killed.

Those guarding the WPD headquarters have taken extra precautions not just against Muslim terrorists, but also against leftist rebels.

But while the police are on guard, the Islamic community in Manila urged authorities not to label all Muslims as "terrorists."

"Muslims in Manila are already busy with their livelihood," said Datu Amerol-Gulam Ambiong, chair of Metro Manila Peace and Order Coordinating Council. "You see us on the sidewalks. Even our women go out and work."

He said Muslims worldwide are expected to fast and refrain from doing evil as the holy month of Ramadan began yesterday.

"It is expressly prohibited to kill during this holy season," Ambiong said.

Ambiong added that Muslims even refrain from sex during Ramadan.

Ambiong also criticized the police for "torturing and framing up" Jerry Minalang, the suspect in the Balintawak bombing.

Minalang, 37, a native of Makaguiling, Sultan Kudarat and a resident of Bagumbayan, Libis, Quezon City, was charged on Monday with two counts of murder and physical injuries.

But Ambiong said Minalang was innocent and that he was tortured into admitting that he was the one who bombed the Golden Hi-way Bus last month.

"The police just pick up anyone they want," Ambiong said. "They just want to get a bigger allocation for their intelligence funds and then get promoted."

He called on President Macapagal-Arroyo and other government leaders to rein in and discipline abusive lawmen.

Ambiong said the different Muslim communities in Metro Manila are already policing their own ranks to weed out terrorists.'

There are large Muslim communities in Quiapo, Manila, Culiat, Quezon City, and Maharlika Village in Taguig.

'Make shopping hassle-free'

By Jerome Aning

CHRISTMAS shopping in Manila should be "safe and hassle-free," according to Mayor Lito Atienza who yesterday ordered the Western Police District to ensure this.

In his directive to WPD head Senior Supt. Pedro Bulaong, Atienza said he anticipates the increase in the number of people who shop in the city with the onset of the Yuletide season.

Atienza also asked Senior Supt. Gil de Castro, head of the Western Traffic Enforcement Office, to ensure the smooth flow of vehicular traffic along major thoroughfares and around commercial centers.

Early shoppers, especially bulk buyers, are already flocking to Quiapo and Divisoria, two favorite Christmas shopping destinations, which offer consumers quality items at affordable prices.

"You can buy a nice pair of jeans for P300 or a shirt or blouse for P150 to P200 pesos," Atienza related. "That's hard to match."

Toys are sold for as low as P100 per three pieces, a bargain for parents who try their best to stretch the family's Christmas budget.

Atienza boasted that Manila has bargain shopping and places for leisure and recreation which are "very much accessible."

Government workers to protest 'interference'

GOVERNMENT workers are set to take to the streets to protest the alleged interference in their personal contractual obligations, particularly their right to secure and pay off salary loans.

According to the Confederation of Non-Stock Savings and Loan Associations Inc. (CONSSLAI), about 1.5 million government workers including soldiers, policemen, foresters and teachers, who are members of non-stock savings and loan associations in more than 25 government agencies, will be affected by the proposed insertions to the 2003 General Appropriations Act.

CONSSLAI president Leandro Bacud said the insertions in the GAA will only prevent the bulk of their members from availing of various loans with interests ranging from 9 to 15 percent per annum.

Bacud said that when Rep. Jesli Lapus of Tarlac insisted on increasing the net take home pay of government workers by proposing insertions to the General Appropriations Act last year, he effectively prevented thousands of government workers from securing salary loans.

According to Lapus, the insertions he proposed in the 2002 GAA were simply meant to provide "decent wages" for government workers.

But Bacud said the changes also proved harmful for the workers.

"(Last year), a government employee with a net take home pay of P2,000 can borrow a minimum of P12,000 from their NSSLAs (non-stock savings and loan associations)," Bacud said. "Under the current GAA, they are prevented from borrowing because their net take home pay would fall below the P3,000 cut off."

Bacud said this forced the workers to use their ATM cards and PIN codes as collateral to be able to borrow from usurers or loansharks at interest rates exceeding 15 to 20 percent per month.

CONSSLAI is comprised of the Armed Forced of the Philippines Savings and Loan Association Inc., Manila Teachers Savings and Loan Association Inc., Police Savings and Loan Association Inc., Bureau of Internal Revenue Savings and Loan Association Inc., and 21 other associations.

Also included are savings and loan associations of private companies such as San Miguel Corporation and Pilipinas Shell.

Bacud said CONSSLAI members are planning to stage protest actions at the House of Representatives and at Malacañang when Congress resumes session on Nov. 11.

The irony that is Lucio Tan

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THIS early, the Philippine National Police (PNP) is thinking of ways to make the Yuletide season terror-free.

Philippine National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. has proposed the designation of areas in every town and city where firecrackers and other pyrotechnics can be exploded, especially during New Year's Eve. These areas will be called "firecracker zones."

This is meant to prevent terrorists from taking advantage of the revelry by exploding bombs in the celebrators' midst.

* * *

"We'll have better control of explosions, and injuries will be minimized during the Yuletide merriment. We don't want terrorists to take advantage of the situation," said Ebdane.

People who cannot control the urge to explode firecrackers during the Christmas holidays can do so in firecracker zones.

This way, authorities will know if a bomb or a firecracker cashed the explosion. A blast that occurs outside the firecracker zone will immediately be determined as a bomb exploding.

* * *

The proposal is partly adopted from the highly successful Davao City experiment last year.

In that experiment, Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte banned all firecrackers in the city, and anyone caught with a firecracker was arrested.

As a result, there were no firecracker injuries when city residents greeted New Year 2002.

* * *

Why can't the government adopt Duterte's successful experiment hook, line and sinker?.

The controversial mayor's reason for banning firecrackers in his city was that he didn't want criminals and terrorists to take advantage of noise and fire their guns at their enemies or explode bombs in public.

Let's ban firecrackers and other pyrotechnics during the holiday season this year.

* * *

Civil libertarians will surely protest the proposal for a complete ban on firecrackers. They will say that the government cannot legislate against a traditional practice.

But the ban is only temporary. The government is only after the welfare of the citizenry.

During a crisis, which this country is undergoing, the government can enjoin the citizenry to do away with some practices that may not redound to the common good.

* * *

Police said that former and active cops were peddling illegal drugs in some areas in Paranaque.

So, what else is new?

What could have been big news was if the report said that not one former or active policeman was involved in the illegal drug trade.

Behind every big crime syndicate in this country is a policeman.

* * *

Business tycoon Lucio Tan was honored a few days ago by Guam, a US territory.

No less than the Pacific island's Gov. Carl T.C. Gutierrez conferred the honors on the Filipino beer, tobacco and airlines magnate. Tan was bestowed the Ancient Order of Chamorri, the highest honor Guam can confer on a foreigner. Tan was also made ambassador-at-large, an honorary office.

The honors were in recognition of Tan's economic and charitable contributions to the island.

* * *

Despite his exalted position in the business community, Tan remains as humble as in the days when he was a salesman-driver for a cigarette company.

That anecdote about him aboard a Philippine Airlines jet bound for Hong Kong is told and retold among friends, acquaintances and subordinates.

Some of Tan's top executives were at the business class when they were told that their boss, the owner of PAL, was seated at the economy class.

* * *

Embarrassed, the executives almost fell over one another to offer their seats in the business class to their big boss.

Tan's asked them tersely: "What time are you arriving in Hong Kong?" The executives mentioned the expected time of arrival.

"What time am I arriving in Hong Kong?" Of course, the reply was the same time since they were on the same plane.

"So, no problem," Tan said. "Passengers in business class and economy class will arrive in Hong Kong at the same time."

Marinduqueños 'Ina' feast

MARINDUQUE natives who live in Manila will celebrate the feast of Marinduque's patroness, the Ina ng Biglang Awa, with afternoon masses from to Nov. 8 to 10 at the St. Paul Seminary Chapel at 7708 St. Paul Road in San Antonio Village, Makati City.

The annual celebration aims to perpetuate the devotion to the Ina ng Biglang Awa and raise funds to support the welfare and charity programs of the people through the Our Lady of Biglang Awa Foundation Inc.

Masses will be held at 5:30 p.m. on Nov. 8, 4 p.m. on Nov. 9 and 4 p.m. on Nov. 10.

All Marinduqueños or those who trace their roots to Marinduque are invited to participate in the celebration. It will be capped by a fellowship on Nov. 10 at the same venue.

Explain where P2B ...

From page A21

opment Council (NCRDO).

"We only want to make sure where the funds go because ... there were a lot of liabilities that must be explained," he said.

He cited reports of mass hiring of personnel as traffic enforcers and consultants, and the acquisition of firearms.

"Instead of engaging in propaganda at the expense of the taxpayers, the MMDA chair should have given more time on matters like the sanitary landfill facilities in San Mateo, Rizal and Carmona Cavite," Gunigundo said.

The lawmaker said Fernando should come up with long-term solutions on problems besetting Metro Manila residents, instead of arming barangay watchmen and pouring kerosene on the goods of hapless vendors.

He also believes that the MMDA should be abolished because "it merely duplicates the functions of local government units."

But Gunigundo, a member of the House appropriations committee, said he would give Fernando a chance to explain during committee hearings on where the funds were used.

"If (Fernando) could explain to us how the public funds were spent, that would be all right," Gunigundo said. "He should be able to convince us or else, I will personally push for the slashing of its budget by as much as half of its current appropriations."

The Valenzuela City congressman also said he and most of his colleagues comprising the so-called NCR bloc would not let Fernando get away with his "propaganda at the expense of the people."

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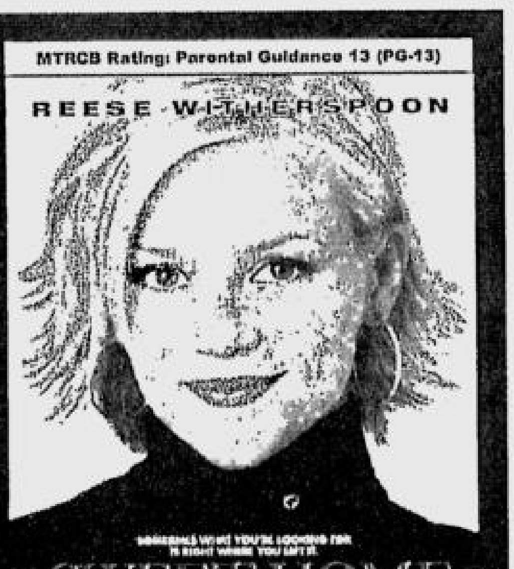
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10 DALAGINDING

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

'I'm first & proud of it'

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

DOUGLAS Nierras and his Powerdance will have a dance concert on Saturday at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The show is called "Can Everybody Powerdance?"

As Nierras says in the following interview, the answer is a resounding "No!"

Q & A

WE'RE kind of confused. Which group will be joining you on Nov. 9, Hotlegs or Powerdance?

Powerdance of course. I formed Hotlegs with Tats and Johnny Manahan in 1981. For eight years thereafter I was artistic director and choreographer for Hotlegs. I quit the group after eight years because I thought that Hotlegs was pursuing a very commercial direction.

Did you get what you wanted?

After a while, I did get what I wanted. I was able to devèlop a very young set of people. I wanted a very definite direction for them. In other words, we wanted to do all sorts of things, not only TV or concert stage. We wanted to do all sorts, to do musicals, to do CCP, cinema. We practically did everything that we wanted to do.

I also choreograph for movies. I choreographed for a Hollywood movie and "Oro Plata Mata."

The title of the show is "Can Everybody Powerdance?" Parang ang yabang ng dating . . .

Mayabang talaga kami eh. I'm the only internationally acclaimed grand-prize winner in choreography in Philippine history. *Wala pang ibang* winner *sa Pilipinas, ako pa lang.*

Paano maging isang Powerdance dancer?

No. 1, they have to have the desire. No. 2, they have to have the dedication to be able to pursue their desire. *Kasi baka* type *lang nilang maging sosyal at* glamorous. Dancing is not all glamorous, it's hard work. It is grueling, painful and cruel.

> 'The craft that I was gifted with is, I think, the only craft that can approximate the experience of touching the face of God'

Why are you doing this then?

Because I love to dance. In the end of all of this, I want to be able to go to sleep and smile and say I have done my part in this world and be happy about it even if I'm poor. But of course, I hope I won't become poor.

Has dancing brought you money?

Well, I have a car. I'm building my house in Antipolo, and I am taking care of my parents, all from dancing. I have a company, a school, a corporation. I have nothing else to speak of. If I'm not dancing today, I will not have anything. I guess it does bring me money after all.

Where do you get your energy?

I got my energy from my mother, who at 90 years old still cooks, goes to the market, shops for things needed in the house, etc. My dad is more relaxed and placid. He's so soft spoken.

They say you're a tyrant . . .

Palagay ko tyrant is too soft a word to describe me. People have called me a monster and all sorts of things. But I think more than anything I just react to motivation.

What monstrous things have you done?

Nananabunot, nambabatok ako ng dancer. I always make sure that what I do is not just an exercise of physical pain. It is more of an exercise of humiliation. You see, dancing is military training and sports combined. Energy for energy, power for power.

What drives you to make sabunot a dancer?

Most of the time, it's just yelling. I don't really hit my dancers everyday. I don't like people who refuse to come out of their shell. If you were a teacher in this country, you would understand what I mean. I hate fabricated stupidity. *Nagtatanga-tangahan dahil ayaw lang mapahiya.* Students who study dance right now are so timid in the wrong sense. I'm a teacher and there are things that I must do to be able to bring out personalities.

Kung papabayaan ko ang isang mahiyain pero magaling naman sumayaw, at hindi ko sisindakin, papaano pa siya magsasayaw? Mapupunta na lang siya sa mga gyrations *kasi mas madali, wala pang mambabatok sa kanya, magpapa-sexy lang siya. Tama ba 'yun?*

We are better than any other country in dance. And I proved that when we won.

Filipinos love to dance. Just look at how many dance contests there are in our noontime shows. The question is, are they really dancing? It hurts me because I try hard to put the art of dance forward and make it work. All this is very counterproductive to what I'm doing.

Tell us about the competition that you won.

It's called the Saitama International Creative Dance Concourse, held in Japan. In terms of prizes and scope, it is one of the biggest competitions for modern dance choreography in the world. It happens every two years. In 1999, they sent an invitation to the different cultural centers around the world for them to send their best bets to the competition. It's not exclusive but it requires that representatives should be in contemporary and modern dance, not pop, not what you see on TV.

The CCP gave the invitation to us, to Philippine Ballet Theater, to Ballet Philippines and to other groups. I don't know how many from the Philippines joined but all in all, 74 companies from different countries passed. From the Philippines, *ako lang.*

You are first asked to send a video of an existing dance number. It passed a panel of 15 judges. They picked 24 companies during the second round of judging. The 24 was whittled down to 12 and then reduced to eight finalists.

Ayun, we ended up winning the grand prize. That happened to be the first international grand prize in dance that the Philippines won, and me, the first in Philippine history. *Yan ang masarap sa first, eh. Makakapagtaray ka kasi* anybody who comes after you is a mere second.

Hindi bale, I've already accepted the fact *na may karapatan naman akong magyabang eh.* But it's not intended to be *mayabang.*

Actually this is not my first international award. When I was with the UP Filipiniana, we won the international grand prix for international folkloric competition in France. It was in 1979.

What was your role?

I was the principal dancer then and Corazon Yñigo was my mentor.

You didn't get the katarayan from her, did you?

Ang katarayan ko? Imagine this, I was a student of Cora Yñigo, Tony Mabesa, Bibot Amador and Fritz Ynfante.

Puro terror 'yun diba?

Mga imbyeranadora talaga!

Why are you the most recognized and the most popular contemporary dance group? Because of you?

Yes, that's No. 1 (laughs). And No. 2, because I dared to do things that other people were scared to do. Like for instance, this concert. You are going to watch an P800,000 concert. No other company would dare do something like this at this expense. We do a concert annually. This is our panata. Otherwise, mamamatay ang company ko.

What if a female dancer is physically well endowed? Does it get in the way of dancing and does it distract the audience?

Not unless you make an issue out of it. It's like when you see a penis dangling while the dancer is dancing in the nude. It's not distracting.

No plaster?

For the local audience, we do that (use plaster). But abroad, totally nude. They are already attuned to watching legitimate performances.

Describe yourself in one word?

Passionate. I have the same passion for people as I have for my craft as I have for my parents and for my God.

For your God?

I am a practicing Catholic, which means I do everything required of a Catholic person. But more than that, I have intimate conversations with my God. Everything I do is in acknowledgment of what He has given me.

If you will notice, every concert that we do, there is always a prayer. This year it is a prayer called the Passion According to St. Matthew.

Why St. Matthew?

Because St. Matthew's version of the passion of Jesus Christ is so lyrical. It is very artistic. *Yung* version ni Matthew *ay napakalandi.* But of course, I consult my friend who recently became a priest. You know what? I am very grateful because the craft that I was gifted with is, I think, the only craft that can approximate the experience of touching the face of God.

Dance? More than poetry or music?

Yes. Makes you fly. It makes you soar. It's nearest to that experience. *Kaya lang nahihiya akong sabihin yan kasi mababawasan ang aking pagka*-monster (laughs).

Is contemporary dance getting the attention and respect that you feel it deserves?

No. The situation of contemporary dance in the Philippines today is practically nil. Despite the existence of Powerdance. Only .01 of the Philippine population watches dance.

Why do you think so?

Because of what is going on right now at lunchtime. The kids right now don't have

FIRST/A27

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3. Contestants are required to fill out the official application form found in the tabloid, BANDERA, with their name, address, signature, contact number and attach three (3) clippings of the new BANDERA masthead.

4. Photocopies of the application form or the masthead will not be accepted.

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12. A panel of judges will determine winning photos with the presence of a DTI representative on December 20, 2002.

13. The list of winners will be published on the December 23, 2002 issue of BANDERA. Winners will also be notified by registered mail

14. All employees of Inquirer Publications, Inc., and its affiliate companies, and their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the contest.

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Promo period is from Sept. 23 to Dec. 18, 2002

See print ad in BANDERA for more details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 3888, Series of 2002

Abalos annoyed by Diana Zubiri's lie

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

I'VE BEEN a resident of Mandaluyong for almost three years now. I have a running joke with Mandaluyong Mayor **Benhur Abalos** and his charming wife **Menchie** that I'm an outpatient of the National Center for Mental Health in that city and that I only get lucid intervals when I write my column and do my "Magandang Umaga Bayan" movie reviews.

Knowing how mild-mannered the mayor is, it must have taken a lot for him to get ticked off by the **Diana Zubiri** flyover controversy. If Mayor Abalos had his way, he would rather not comment on the issue. But I egged him to say his piece.

The mayor said: "The pictorial took place last Oct. 29 at about 2 p.m. It lasted for about 20 minutes. I issued a mayor's permit with specific instructions that Diana would be wearing shorts and a tank top. I always accommodate requests for shootings provided they have an MMDA clearance.

"I got the shock of my life when I was watching the news that same day and they showed the pictorial and she was wearing a two-piece bathing suit. To make matters worse, it was implied that I okayed it. They were downplaying the bomb threats and saying there's another kind of bomb in Mandaluyong. A sex bomb."

What really irks him is Diana's blatant lie in her TV interviews where she questioned why she was the only one being nailed.

"I also filed a case against photographer **Xander Angeles** and FHM magazine editor in chief **Eric Ramos**," Abalos said. "I don't see the need to include the entire editorial board of FHM. I just want it to be airtight. We should let the court decide."

There are more subtle ways of attracting attention, but then again some people don't know when to stop. "Less is more" is the in thing these days. But in the case of our bold stars, the less clothes they have on, the more exposure they get.

Personal

MILLIE grazie to the staff of Coffee Overdose in San Fernando, Pampanga for inviting me to do the ribbon-cutting during their grand opening last Tuesday. Special thanks to my friend for all seasons **Emma San Juan**, Dr. **Jun Carreon, Menelle Ghomian, Arlan Agola, Anne Maglague** and **Vilma Caluag** (Happy birthday, madame Vi!). Your company is as addicting as your coffee and everything else on your menu.

Thanks to Vice Mayor **Joey Baluyot** of Concepcion, Tarlac for not being too much of a big shot to be a friend. You sure know how to make me laugh even when I'm not in the mood to do so.

For feedback, e-mail friends_at_dsquare @yahoo.com

The ideal...

From page A28

so funny that the director usually shouted "cut!" at him.

Colonel Rivera was very much a married man, but was he also affected by Nida's presence?

I had been an LVNer through and through, meaning, I was against the Sampaguitans. In the next generation, the rivalry would be between the Noranians and the Vilmanians; now it is between the Juday-ans and the Jolinians. My favorite actress was Tessie Quintana, and my favorite actor was Pol Salcedo.

Disservice

Thus, in 1955, I felt like running from Loakan to New Manila to make *sumbong* to the Grand Lady of Philippine Movies that Nestor de Villa and Dolphy, as well as the director, were doing LVN a great disservice. I knew that, even in her age, Doña Sisang was very meticulous, and would not tolerate such a sloppy treatment of an LVN offering.

Above all, I wanted to tell the Grand Lady that Nida Blanca was it. I wanted to offer my unsolicited endorsement that Doña Sisang should also nurture the ideal cadet girl the way she did Tessie Quintana, Delia Razon, Rosa Rosal, and Lilia Dizon, and even Mila del Sol before she junked her rich Tambunting husband to run off with the handsome American Al Young.

In the Academy, a cadet is required to display a picture of his girlfriend in his locker, to the left of his mirror. In fact, any girl would do; nobody would see the difference. Parenthetically, in Baguio this girl is called a "drag"; in West Point, she is called a "spoon," which is more suggestive, because the boy is supposed to be the "fork" in the pair.

Locker display

I graduated from the Nabua High School in Camarines Sur on April 21, 1950, but by May 8, my girlfriend was married to an old US Navy man on furlough. Thus, until I became a yearling, I had been too busy to think of girls.

When I was a plebe, I just borrowed a picture from my roommate Jackie Garcia so I would have somebody to display in my locker.

Then, in August 1953, M.I.T. (Doroteo Jose) Builder magazine featured on its cover a "beauty and brains." I wrote the Ch.E. sophomore, and she obliged to send me her picture to be displayed in my locker, where it stayed until my graduation from PMA in April 1956. I invited this BB girl to our Charlie Company Christmas party in San Juan del Monte in 1953. After that, she was recognized as my official "drag."

And who would not be complimented when a weird classmate described her as a Deborah Kerr look-alike?

Besides, in October 1953, I finally met this girl I was going to marry!

In my situation, therefore, at the time of "Hiyasmin," I would not eyed fancy having Nida Blanca's picture in my locker, although I admired her very much. I knew that many cadets in Baguio, by the platoons, were having crushes on the actress. But nobody seemed brave enough to make the first move.

About my wife Betty and me. After more than 45 years, eight children and seven grandchildren, we are even getting sweeter as time goes by.

For now, good-bye "Hiyasmin," Nida Blanca, the ideal *kaydet* girl!

(The author is a retired "but not tired" colonel of the Philippine Army, and a member of Class '56 of the Philippine Military Academy.)

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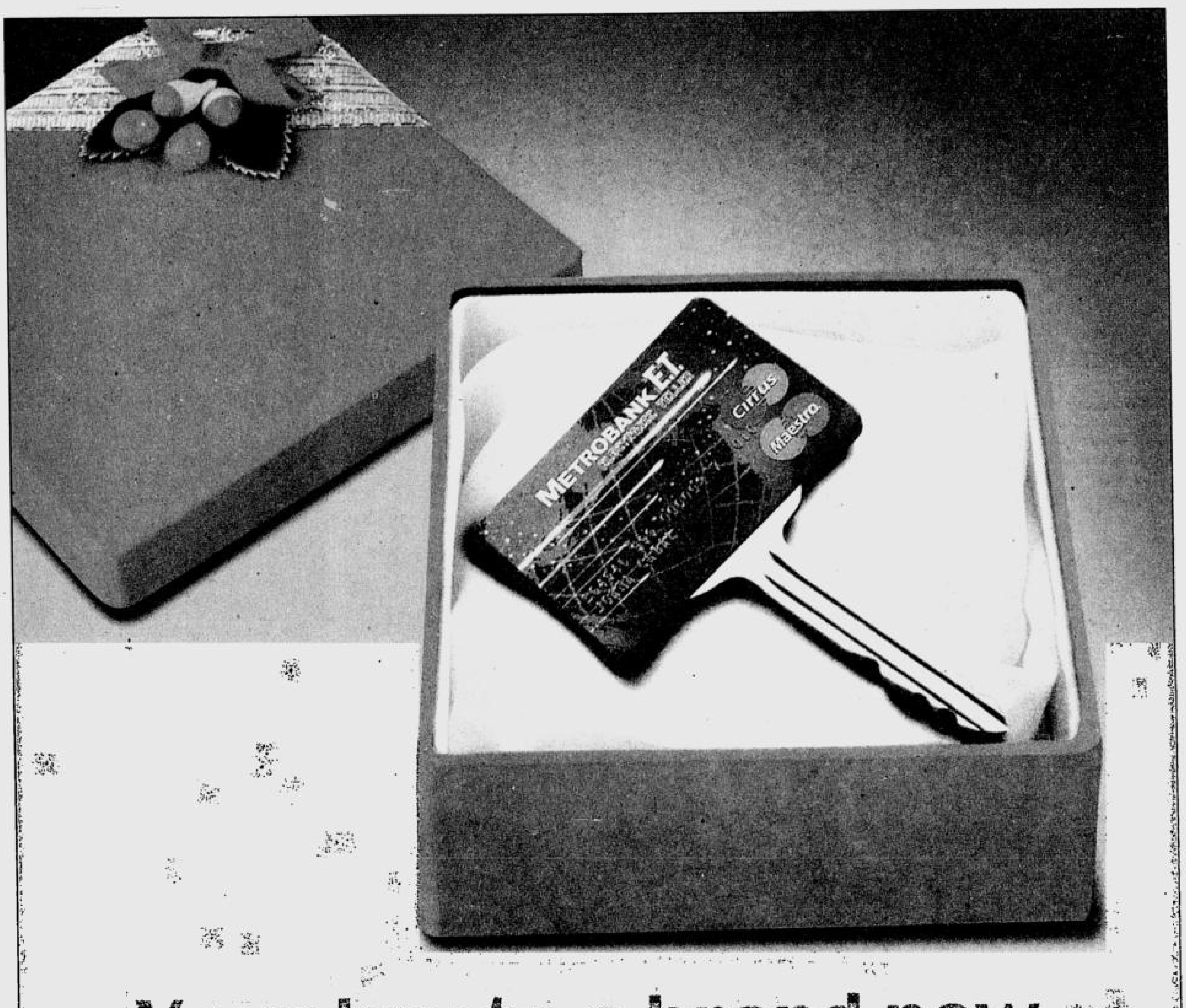

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Those TV awards

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

SOME viewers are bothered by the subjectivity of some current awards for "excellence" in television. They long for the days of the Citizens' Awards for Television (CAT), when objective judges viewed shows for a whole year before citing each new TV season's standout.

Some tilts these days require judges to watch only one per show that's been nominated, so it's difficult to determine a program's consistent achievement, which is important when you're citing it for being the "best" in its category.

Other winners are also believed to be subjectively favored by some judges, for any number of reasons, so when they win, viewers are perplexed.

And there's unnecessary duplication when separate awards are given to a show and to its hosts. One award for the show as a whole should be quite sufficient!

We also believe that, since the major channels have all gone overboard in terms of sex and exploitation in a number of their shows, there should have been no winner of the top "station with the most balanced programming" awards.

How could there have been a winner when the leading channels were so desperate to beat each other in the ratings race that they conveniently forgot basic programming rules and standards, and assaulted viewers, especially minors, with reprehensible features and portions?

Viewers are therefore advised to think twice before using TV awards as genuine touchstones for excellent work on the tube. And they should remind themselves to make more active use of their collective Viewer Power to keep some TV people's disturbing excesses in check.

Feedback

MARK Hanzel Lao of San Andres Bukid, Manila shares his exhilaration at viewing "Mga Munting Tinig" recently. Excerpts: "...Being a typical PAL ('palamunin') student, P80 for a premiere seat in a posh theater is a major no-no for me. But the movie was showing in only a few theaters, so I had no choice. Well, the money was well-spent.

"As the movie was about to finish, I was filled with inspiration and applauded with tears of joy in praise of such a superb Filipino film. Leaving the theater, I thought of the local film situation: what's happening to the industry—to moviegoers' taste—to producers of quality movies?"

"Here is a good movie, hailed as one of the 10 classic Asian films this year - but the theater wasn't nearly as full as others showing Hollywood flicks. What's happened to our appreciation, our sense of art, our nationalism? Aside from cheesy American movies, the current crowd-drawers are local sex flicks."

"Why do Filipinos love watching Hollywood imports? Is it because watching a local movie immediately brands the viewer a 'jologs'? How about the sages—where have all the wise men of the local movie industry gone? They should have initiated the Renaissance while others were still languishing in the Dark Ages."

"It's currently the 'in' thing to view art films, to participate in foreign festivals, to read reviews. Well, 'Mga Munting Tinig' is an art film—how come we aren't giving it the patronage and recognition it deserves? Why are there very few reviews about it? Why isn't it being praised by columnists? Is it because it wasn't produced by a major film company?"

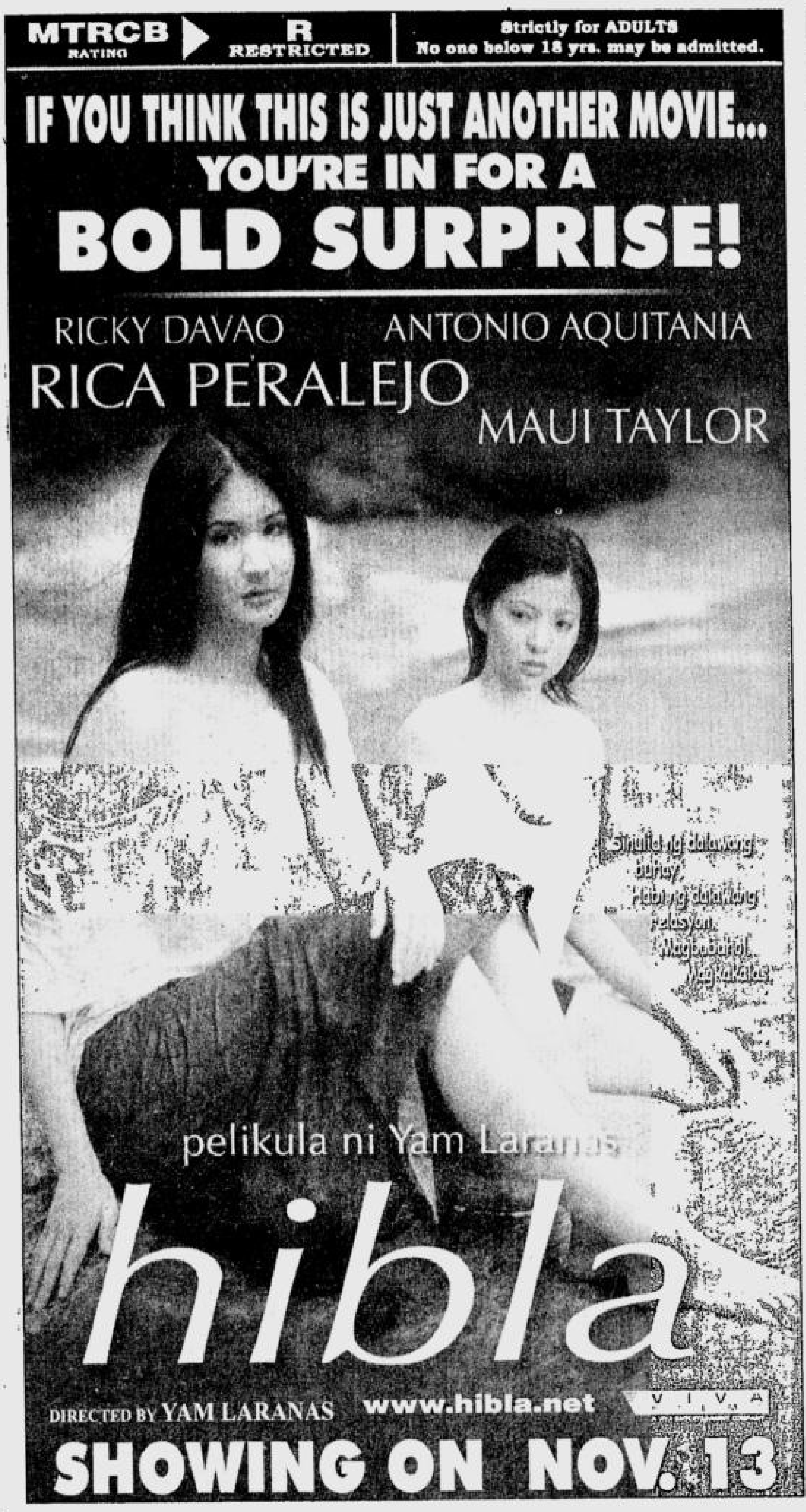
"Well, newsflash: It's a potential contender in the Oscars' Foreign Film category. Will Pinoys wait for the movie to win that award before rushing to see it?"

"Well, I'm not waiting. With this letter, I'm lending my tiny voice in support of the film, which despite all evidence to the contrary has made me believe that the Philippine movie industry still has hope . . ."

Entertainment at Merk's

JACQUI Magno sings at Merk's Bar Bistro (level 3, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center) on Nov. 16 and 30 and Dec. 14 at 9 p.m.

Silk and Steel performs on Mondays and Saturdays. **Sherman** sings on Wednesdays. On Nov. 9, the featured singer is **Chad Borja**. On Nov. 13, it's **Mon David**. Call 757-4721.



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IF YOU THINK THIS IS JUST ANOTHER MOVIE... YOU'RE IN FOR A BOLD SURPRISE!

RICKY DAVAO ANTONIO AQUITANIA
RICA PERALEJO MAUI TAYLOR

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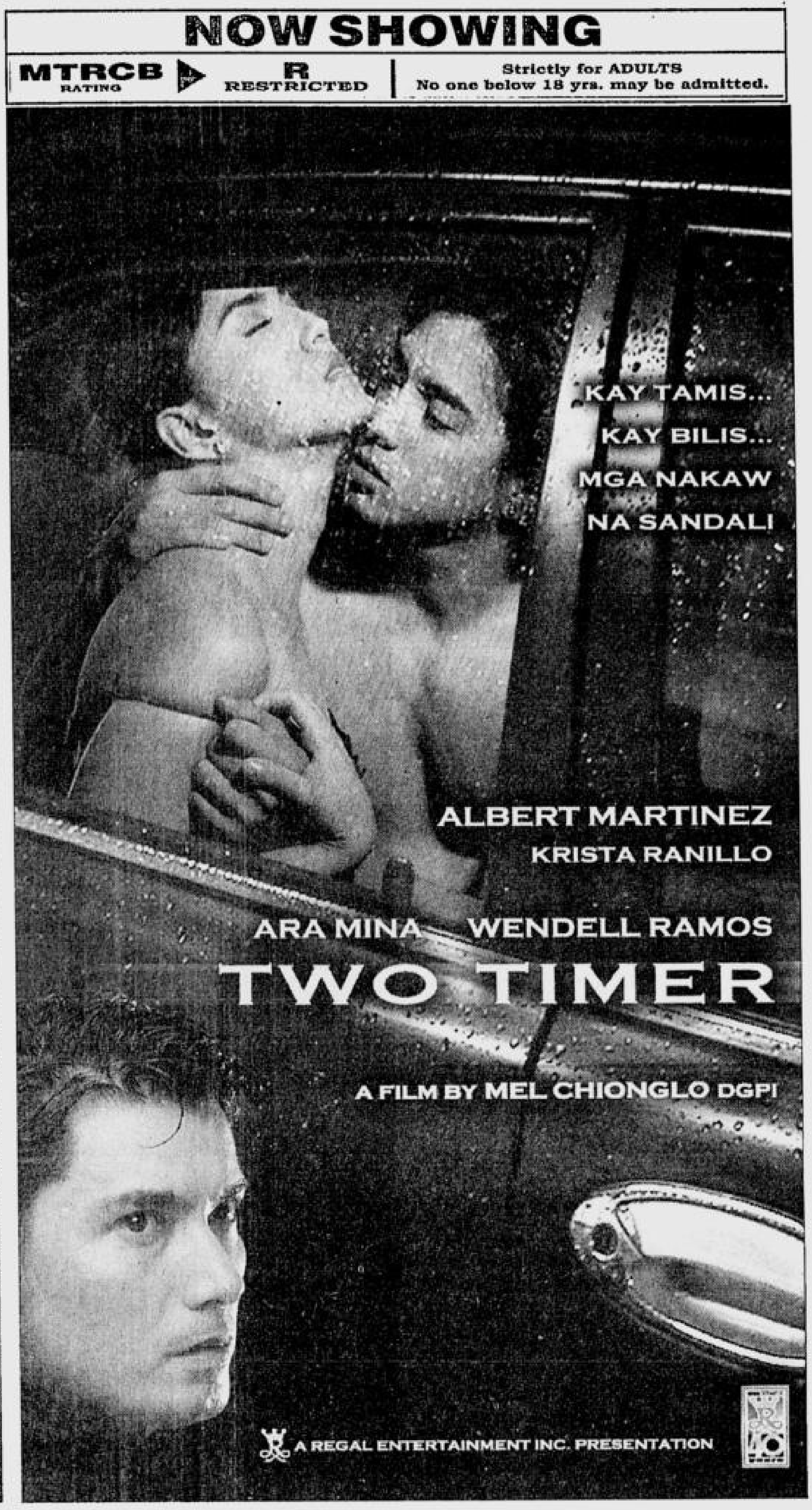
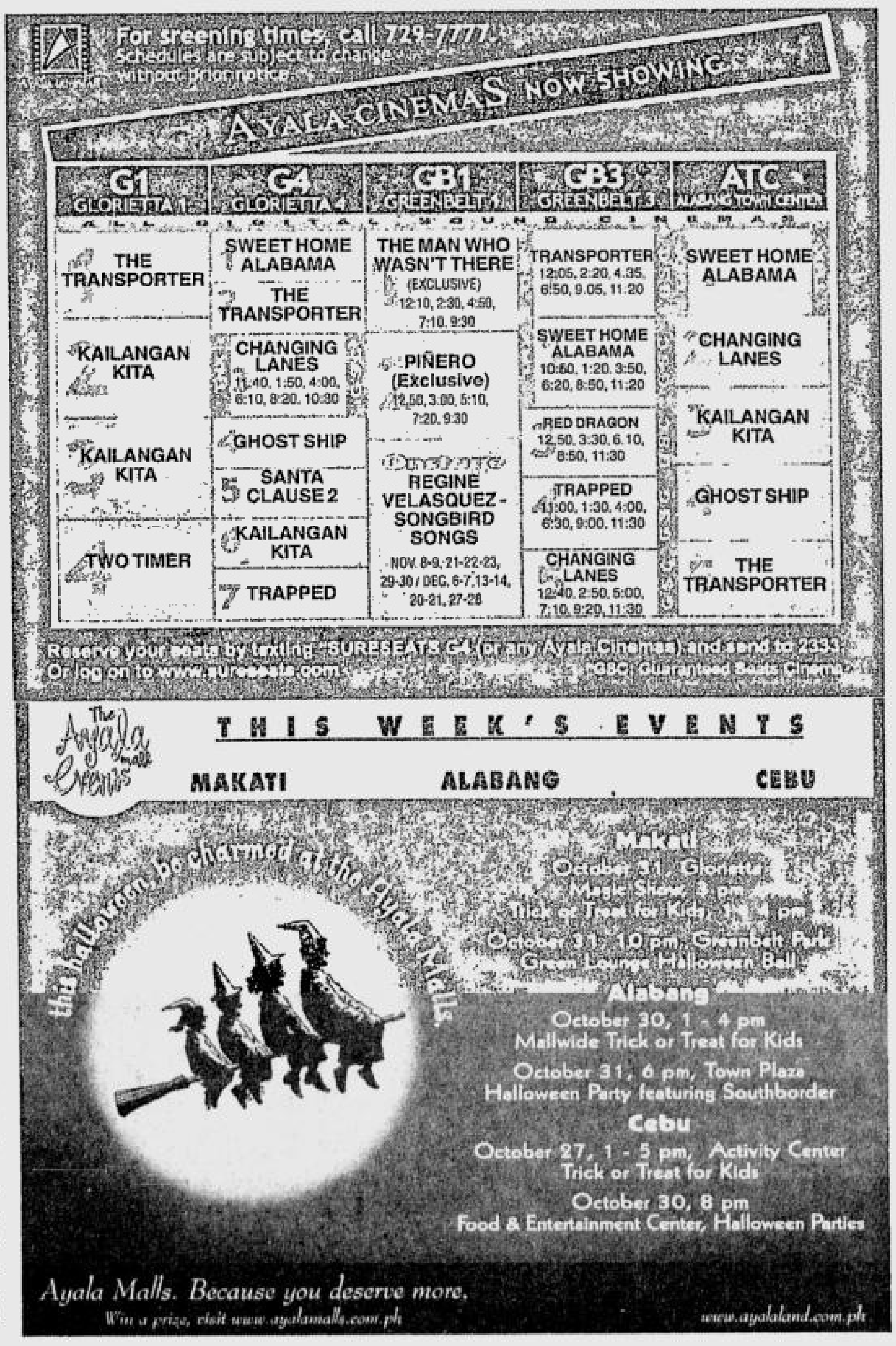
SHOWING ON NOV. 13



NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING R RESTRICTED Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.

KAY TAMIS... KAY BILIS... MGA NAKAW NA SANDALI

ALBERT MARTINEZ KRISTA RANILLO
ARA MINA WENDELL RAMOS
TWO TIMER
A FILM BY MEL CHIONGLO DGPI
A REGAL ENTERTAINMENT INC. PRESENTATION



For sreening times, call 729-7777. Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
THE TRANSPORTER	SWEET HOME ALABAMA	THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE (EXCLUSIVE) 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30	TRANSPORTER 12:05, 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9.05, 11:20	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
KAILANGAN KITA	THE TRANSPORTER	PIÑERO (Exclusive) 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30	SWEET HOME ALABAMA 10:50, 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	CHANGING LANES
KAILANGAN KITA	CHANGING LANES 11:40, 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 10:30	REGINE VELASQUEZ - SONGBIRD SONGS NOV. 8-9, 21-22-23, 29-30 / DEC. 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28	RED DRAGON 12:50, 3:30, 6.10, 8:50, 11:30	KAILANGAN KITA
TWO TIMER	GHOST SHIP		TRAPPED 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30	GHOST SHIP
	SANTA CLAUSE 2		CHANGING LANES 12:40, 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30	THE TRANSPORTER
	KAILANGAN KITA			
	TRAPPED			

ALL DIGITAL SOUND CINEMAS

Reserve your seats by texting "SURESEATS G4 (or any Ayala Cinemas) and send to 2333. Or log on to www.sureseats.com. *GSC: Guaranteed Seats Cinema

The Ayala malls Events
THIS WEEK'S EVENTS
MAKATI ALABANG CEBU

this halloween, be charmed at the Ayala Malls.

Makati
October 31, Glorietta
Music Show, 3 pm
Trick or Treat for Kids, 1 - 4 pm
October 31, 10 pm, Greenbelt Park
Green Lounge Halloween Ball

Alabang
October 30, 1 - 4 pm
Mallwide Trick or Treat for Kids
October 31, 6 pm, Town Plaza
Halloween Party featuring Southborder

Cebu
October 27, 1 - 5 pm, Activity Center
Trick or Treat for Kids
October 30, 8 pm
Food & Entertainment Center, Halloween Parties

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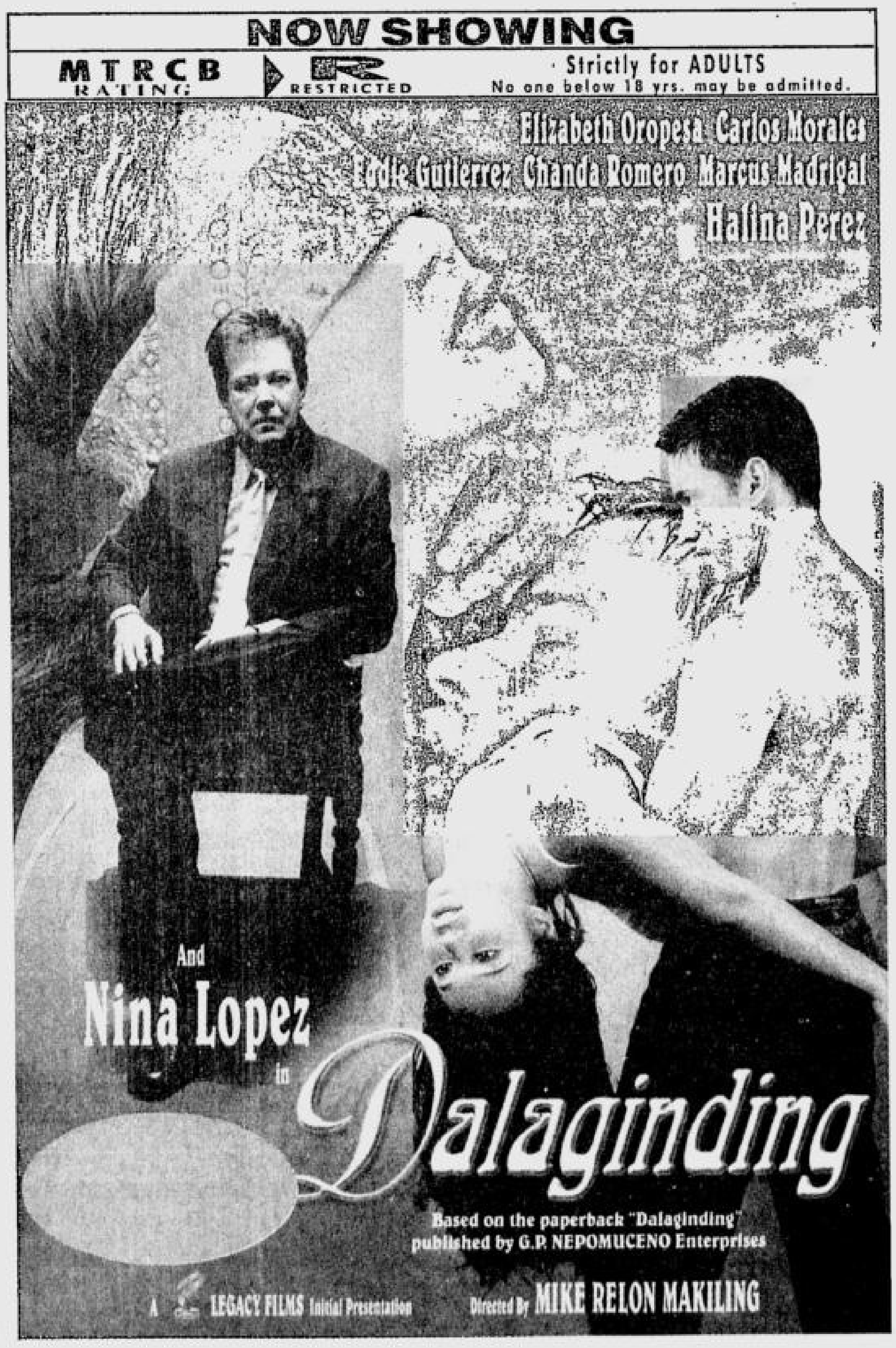
www.ayalaland.com.ph



NOW SHOWING
MTRCB RATING R RESTRICTED Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.

Elizabeth Oropesa Carlos Morales
Eddie Gutierrez Chanda Romero Marcus Madrigal
Halina Perez
And Nina Lopez in
Dalaginding

Based on the paperback "Dalaginding" published by G.P. NEPOMUCENO Enterprises

A LEGACY FILMS Initial Presentation Directed By MIKE RELON MAKILING

SEX Bomb Dancers.

Streetboys join Sex Bomb Girls in dance concert

THE SEX Bomb Dancers, the hottest and most successful all-female dance group today, will meet for the first time The Streetboys, the energetic and talented male dance group, in a dance concert, "My Sex Bomb... I Like," 9 tonight at Klownz Comedy Bar in Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

The Sex Bomb Dancers and The Streetboys are the only dance groups today who became popular through their TV appearances, with recording and film ventures.

The Streetboys are now filming "Spirit Warriors 2," a possible entry to the Metro Manila Film Festival in December.

The Sex Bomb Girls are doing their first movie for Regal Films, "Bakit Papa?"

The dance concert will coincide with the birthday of Lito Alejandria, the business partner of Allan K at Klownz Comedy Bar.

For ticket reservations, call 411-1488 or 371-4870 or text 0917-810-9394.

'I'm first . . .

From page A24

artistic performance training or exposure in the elementary and high school. Art has been totally relegated to the sidelines. We're more concerned with commerce, with the advancement of technology, etc.

Why should people watch your concert?

A lot of the people usually watch to enjoy themselves and get enlightened. The funny thing is that they always want to look for a message of some sort. May profundity *na naman ba ito*? I hate that.

I just want them to go there, sit and enjoy themselves. The message will come. It's like love. You don't have to look for love, it will come to you. I don't think art should be belabored.

How can we learn anything about life from dance?

You will. Its hard to explain but I assure you, you will.

Louie C. Camino, Marinel R. Cruz

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	GAMITAN / VOODOO
ODEON	TRANSPORTER
ODEON-2	BUKAS BABAHA ANG DUGO / SENSUAL
ROBEN	DALAGINDING
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	AUSTIN POWER / DERAILED

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
QUEZON-1	DALAGINDING
REMAR	DALAGINDING
REMAR-2	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	KAILANGAN KITA
B	TWO TIMER
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	SANTA CLAUSE 2
CINEMA-2	GHOST SHIP

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
CINEMA-2	BEDTIME STORIES
CINEMA-3	HUWAG MONG TAKASAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SINGSING NI LOLA
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MUNTING TINIG
CINEMA-6	BALLISTIC
CINEMA-7	BAKIT NGAYON KA LANG
CINEMA-8	RED DRAGON
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	GHOST SHIP
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	HALLOWEEN RESSURECTION
CINEMA-12	SANTA CLAUSE 2
CINEMA-14	SINGSING NI LOLA
CINEMA-15	9 MORNINGS

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

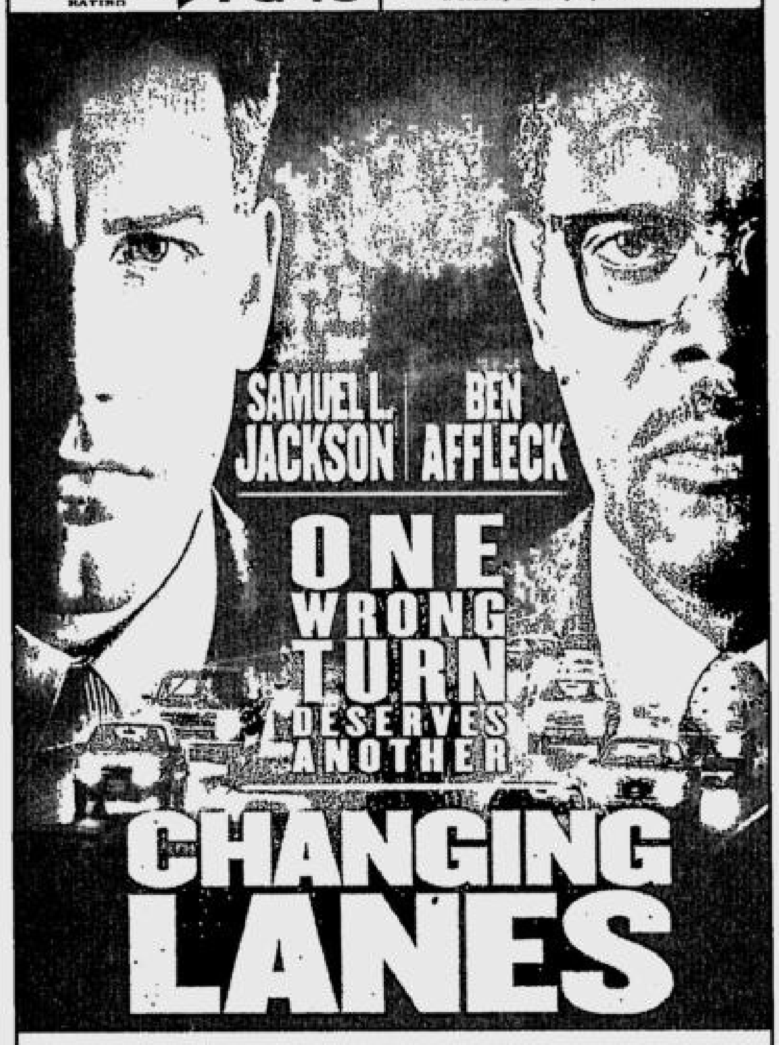
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

CINEMA 1	MR DEEDS
CINEMA 2	9 MORNINGS
CINEMA 3	BESTMAN
CINEMA 4	K-19

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.



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DOLBY DIGITAL
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 THE TRANSPORTER 11:50, 2:10, 4:25, 6:40, 8:55 P 13
CINEMA 2 SWEET HOME ALABAMA 11:50, 2:05, 4:20, 6:35, 8:50 P 13
All Reserved Seating: P120.00
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NOV 7, 2002 "MULATTO" 9:00 PM
NOV 8&9, 2002 "THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES" 9:00 PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

KAILANGAN KITA P13 12:40,2:55,5:10, 7:25,9:40	TRANSPORTER P13 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	CHANGING LANES P13 12:40,3:05,5:30, 7:45,10:00
TRAPPED R18 12:50,3:05,5:20, 7:35,9:50	GHOST SHIP R18 11:40,1:40,3:40, 5:40,7:40,9:40	SWEET HOME ALABAMA P13 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

—THE— PODIUM CINEMA
18 ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong City
Tel : 638 9781 - 85 • 633 8976
1 TRAPPED 11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/ 10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:45 END
2 CHANGING LANES 11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/ 10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:40 END
LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 - Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate P120.00 - After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	KAILANGAN KITA•1:35/3:45/5:55/8:05
Ali 2	TWO TIMER•12:10/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50
Ali 3	GHOST SHIP•12:05/2:15/4:25/6:35/8:40
Ali 4	TRAPPED•12:05/2:15/4:25/6:35/8:40
Ali 5	TRANSPORTER•2:00/4:10/6:20/8:30
Ali 6	SWEET HOME ALABAMA•12:20/2:20/4:20/6:20/8:20
Ali 7	CHANGING LANES• 12:05/2:15/4:25/6:35/8:40

FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS

Farmers 1	DALAGINDING•1:40/3:40/5:40/7:40
Farmers 2	TWO TIMER•1:15/3:25/5:35/7:45

ARANETA COLISEUM

NOV. 3, 10	PBA GAMES
NOV. 15	STUDIO 23 MYX PARTY
NOV. 16	HEALING THE FAMILY

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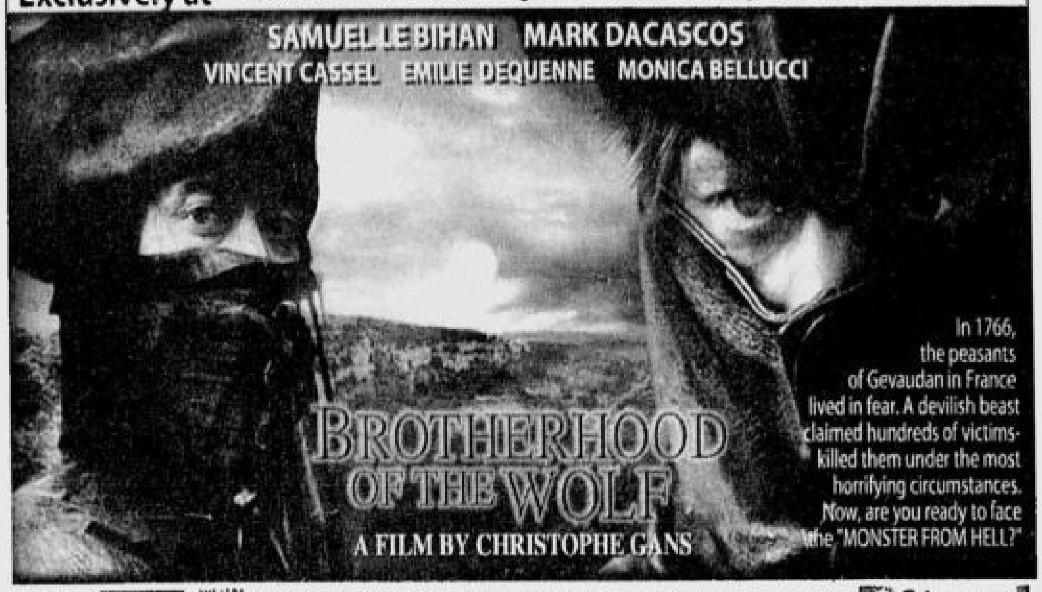

SAMUEL LE BIHAN
MARK DACASCOS
VINCENT CASSEL
EMILIE DEQUENNE
MONICA BELLUCCI
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A FILM BY CHRISTOPHE GANS
In 1766, the peasants of Gevaudan in France lived in fear. A devilish beast claimed hundreds of victims-killed them under the most horrifying circumstances. Now, are you ready to face the "MONSTER FROM HELL?"

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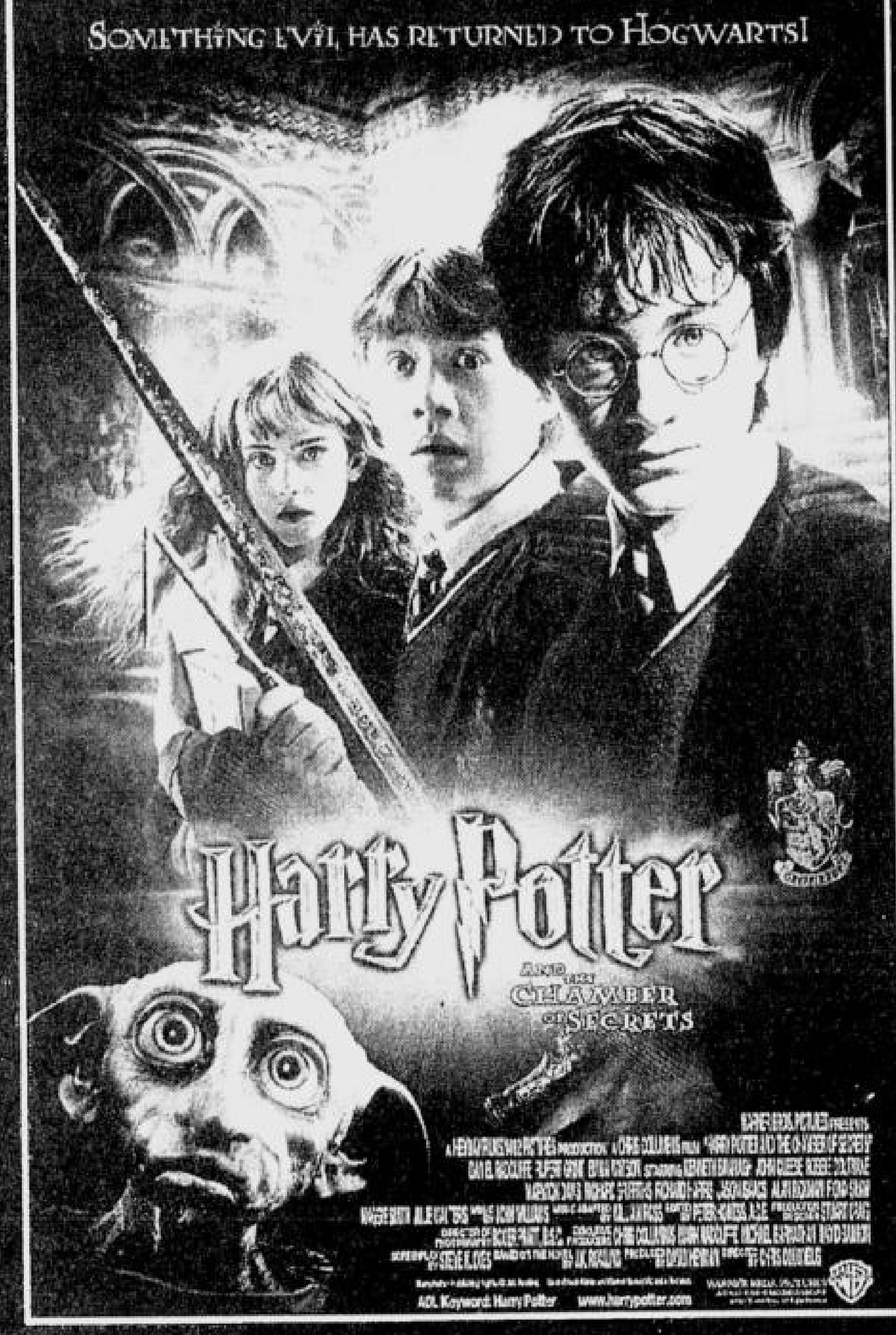

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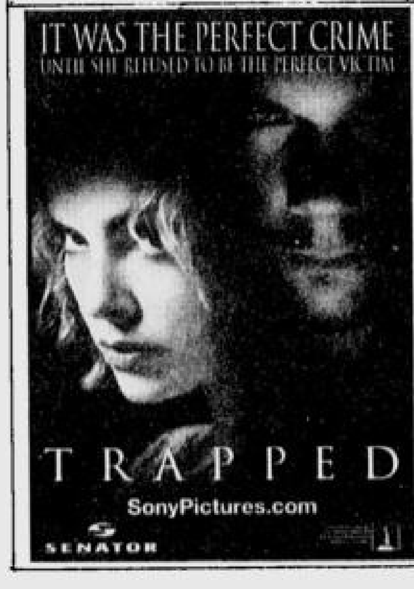
MTRCB Rating: General Patronage (G)

AYALA CINEMAS
NOW SHOWING
ArtFilm GREENBELT 1
DARING, AWARD-WINNING, EXTRAORDINARY
PIÑERO
"Piñero" tells the story of the explosive life of a Latino icon, the poet-playwright-actor Miguel Piñero, whose urban poetry is recognized as a pre-cursor to rap and hip-hop. After doing time in hard-core Sing-Sing for petty thefts and drug dealing, Piñero's prison experiences developed into the 1974 Tony-nominated play Short Eyes. The resulting notoriety and fame was too much for the Latino bad-boy genius who retreated to the darker corners of New York City.
Starring: Benjamin Bratt, Talisa Soto, Mandy Patinkin, Rosita Moreno, Jaime Sanchez; Directed by: Leon Ichaso
"Vibrant and compelling."
- Kevin Thomas, LOS ANGELES TIMES
MTRCB RATING: Restricted 18 (R)

NOKIA
SKYFILMS

MTRCB RATING ▶ R Restricted
Strictly for ADULTS
No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted.



IT WAS THE PERFECT CRIME
UNTIL SHE REFUSED TO BE THE PERFECT VICTIM
TRAPPED
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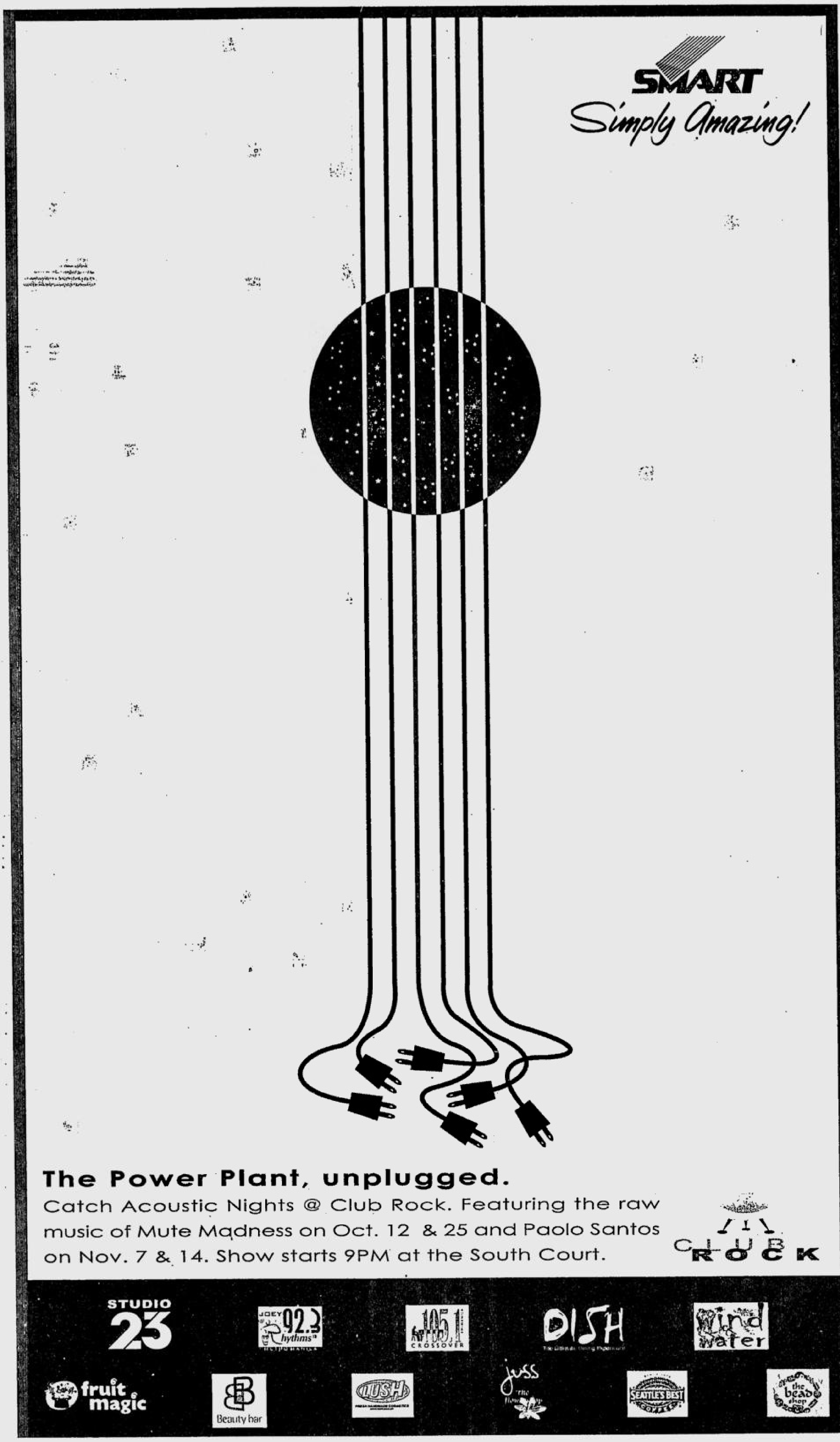
Entertaining Kidnap Thriller
Professional kidnappers Joe and Cheryl Hickey (Kevin Bacon, *HOLLOW MAN* and Courtney Love, *PEOPLE VS. LARRY FLYNT*) think they have mastered a foolproof plan to extort money from wealthy families.
They kidnap the child of rich parents, hold the kid for 24 hours, keeping the mother under Joe's control while Cheryl gets the ransom from the father, who is on a trip.
But things go very wrong when they try the scheme on Dr. and Mrs. Will Jennings (Charlize Theron, *SWEET NOVEMBER* and Stuart Townsend, *QUEEN OF THE DAMNED*), in part because their daughter Abby (Dakota Fanning, *I AM SAM*) is asthmatic, and in part because the Jennings find out more than Joe Hickley wants them to know.
NOW SHOWING


SMART Simply Amazing!

The Power Plant, unplugged.

Catch Acoustic Nights @ Club Rock. Featuring the raw music of Mute Madness on Oct. 12 & 25 and Paolo Santos on Nov. 7 & 14. Show starts 9PM at the South Court.

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NIDA BLANCA in the '90s. How much more beautiful and luscious she was four decades earlier!

REMEMBERING NIDA BLANCA

The ideal 'Kaydet Girl'

By Candio P. Filiol

NIDA BLANCA had starred in so many movies in her lifetime that the one I would like to remember her by seems completely forgotten by now. The title was "Hiyasmi," the name of a beautiful Muslim maiden who was the object of affection of a senior cadet, or firstie, Nestor de Villa. She was the ideal *kaydet* girl.

The year was 1955, the second term of our junior or cow-year. The setting was the Philippine Military Academy in Loakan, Baguio. Starring Nida Blanca as the *kaydet* girl, the cast included Nestor de Villa, as the boyfriend of Nida; Dolphy, another PMA cadet; Lt. Col. Simplicio Rivera as himself, commandant of cadets; and Cadet Edgardo Alfabeto as chairman of the honor committee.

If, at the time of her untimely death on Nov. 7, 2001, Nida Blanca was still very sweet and charming, one can just imagine how beautiful and luscious she was 46 years earlier. She was indeed the ideal *kaydet* girl. Perfect.

Incongruous

Nestor de Villa was young, tall, and handsome, but he looked very incongruous in a cadet uniform with his long hair. Dolphy, the future comedy king, was already wearing his funny face, but he even looked more incongruous in a cadet uniform with his long hair and characteristic slouch.

According to General Kiks Cabrera, then a yearling, they spent a lot of time teaching "Cadet Lieutenant" Nestor de Villa how to handle a sword. But when he marched off leading a real cadet platoon, he could not coordinate his steps with his arm-swings, and when he gave the command "Steady, eyes right!" in front of the grandstand, hell broke loose.

The more terrible yearlings felt like "killing" dumbguards de Villa and Quizon if they had been real plebes, as we did Rene de Villa a year earlier. This hostility over the laxity of the two actor-cadets could have been generated by their jealousy over the ideal *kaydet* girl. How could they deserve her?

Our local versions are certainly a far cry from the stateside originals. When Montgomery Cliff and Alan Ladd portrayed West Point cadets, their appearances and demeanors, haircuts and all, were authentic.

When I was in high school, Sampaguita Pictures produced "Baguio Cadets," starring Oscar Moreno and Fred Montilla. Truth to tell, the two actors were the ones who inspired me to aspire to become a PMA cadet. I knew I was not as handsome as they were, but I thought that I could make up for it in academics, and I topped the entrance examinations for our class.

How about Nestor de Villa and Dolphy? As PMA actor-cadets, they might have turned off aspirants, unlike Oscar Moreno and Fred Montilla. But there was a saving grace in that 1955 film: Nida Blanca, the ideal *kaydet* girl. So, whenever we felt like getting angry, we just thought of Nida, and everything would be fine.

Affected

Aside from Nida Blanca, whose mere presence during the shooting was enough to raise our spirits, the neophyte actor Colonel Rivera, our commandant, gave us the kicks. He is a native of Malabon, yet his Tagalog was

IDEAL/ A25

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BUSINESS

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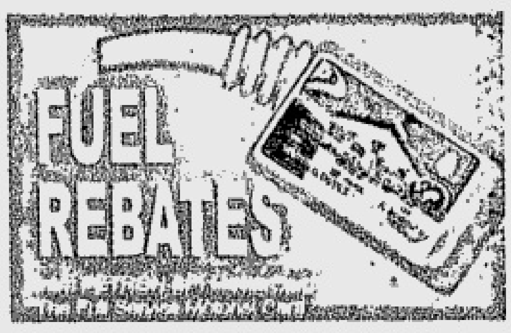
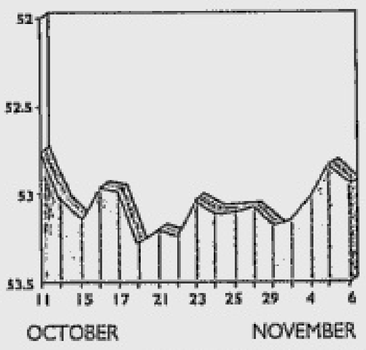


INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱ 52.94= $1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 6, 2002

¥ 122.44= $1

As of 5 p.m., Nov. 6, 2002

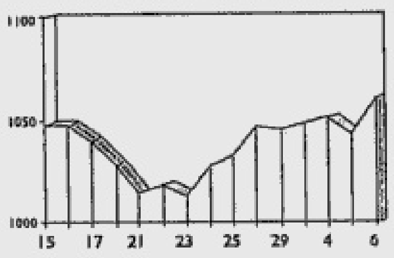
GOLD: $317.00-317.50

per ounce Hong Kong, Nov. 6, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Shares rise 1.7%

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARE prices rose 1.7 percent yesterday as investors bargain-hunted amid expectations the US Federal Reserve will trim interest rates, dealers said.

A rate cut is seen giving the US economy a much-needed boost, which should also benefit its trading partners, including the Philippines, analysts said.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index added 18.13 points to close at 1,060.44.

Turnover fell to 68.34 million shares, but value rose to P459.53 million compared with 77.1 million shares worth P179.9 million traded on Tuesday.

Harry Liu of Summit Securities said promising corporate results offered little encouragement.

"It's considered that some companies are performing a bit better. It's just that the market lacks confidence," he said.

"It's not the fundamentals of the companies the market is looking into. It's more of the internal security concerns and the global political situation."

AFP

ADB earmarks $815M in new loans for RP

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ASIAN Development Bank has earmarked $815 million in new loans for the Philippines over the next three years, covering 15 new projects focusing on socio-environmental development and poverty reduction.

ADB country director Thomas Crouch said yesterday that on top of this lending program, the bank has also lined up $6.2 million worth of technical assistance grants covering 12 projects supporting structural and policy reforms in governance, power and energy, finance, environment, education and institution-strengthening programs for national agencies and local governments.

Crouch said the bank also hoped to improve the disbursement of funds to the Philippines, the fourth largest country in its lending portfolio.

As the government's tight fiscal situation had hampered the flow of counterpart funding to foreign-assisted projects, the ADB has designed its lending for 2003 in a way that would minimize the need for counterpart funds while loans for later years were programmed based on the availability of such funds.

"In conjunction with its lending program, ADB will continue to pursue cofinancing to reduce the burden on the government budget. ADB will maintain its dialogue with the government to identify the best financing solutions for projects, including the use of its credit enhancement products and private sector alternatives," the bank said in its country assistance update released yesterday.

"Unprogrammed private sector operations will be explored in financial intermediation and infrastructure sectors such as energy, ports, water supply and solid waste management," it added.

About 33 percent of the 15 projects currently included by the ADB in the lending pipeline for 2003-2005 relate to core poverty intervention prioritizing education, urban development, power, roads, environment management, financial market and development of small and medium enterprises.

The ADB country assistance strategy also covers rural development, microfinance, governance, health, irrigation and airports as well as a regional focus on war-torn Mindanao.

Compared to the 2002-2004 country assistance update which programmed 18 loans, the latest blueprint included five new projects, scrapped another five and deferred others.

The five new projects included in the pipeline were:

- Electricity Market and Transmission System worth $40 million, which will help put up the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (WESM) and support transmission upgrades;
- Non-bank Financial Governance Program Phase 2 worth $150 million, which will support the development of the capital markets;
- Autonomous Region for Muslim Mindanao Basic Education worth $10 million;
- Road Sector improvement worth $100 million, and
- Airports Project phase 4 worth $50 million.

On the other hand, five projects worth a combined $265 million were scrapped from the previous list, covering rural electrification, the Philippine National Railways south railway project, uplant communities development, rural transmission system and electrification as well as the local government unit infrastructure development facility.

The removal of these five projects was partly due to the government's tight fiscal situation, which prompted a realignment of priorities over the next years, Crouch said.

The new strategy disclosed by the ADB included five programs for 2003: the Non-Bank Finance Governance program 2; Enhancement of Rural Livelihood in Mindanao Uplands ($34.13 million); Microfinance for Rural De-

ADB/B2

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Bayantel says talks on $477M worth of debts 'progressing'

By Abigail L. Ho

CASH-STRAPPED Bayan Telecommunications Inc. said its debt restructuring efforts for $477 million worth of debts "still continue to progress" and that the introduction of new services and its ongoing facilities improvement are expected to boost its year-end numbers.

BayanTel chief finance officer Gary Olivar said in an interview that while there was still no final word from its creditors on its debt restructuring proposal, talks were still moving and signs of progress were still there.

"Things continue to happen. Things continue to progress. With our facilities improvement, financial restructuring and new products and services, we're on track to meet our latest revised budget," he told the INQUIRER.

He declined to disclose the company's year-end revenue target although he said BayanTel aimed to further reduce its net loss numbers, especially with the recent addition of new products and services.

"The net loss will still depend on some year-end figures but I can say we continue to have an operating cash flow," Olivar said.

The Lopez-owned firm yesterday launched its new customized suite of Internet protocol virtual private network (IP VPN) solutions that would address the connectivity, security and flexibility requirements of small- to large-scale businesses.

These solutions will allow companies to transmit data, video and voice communications between individuals, branch offices, and their corporate networks in a secure and reliable manner, even through a public infrastructure like the Internet.

"Our customers can expect reliability, security, efficiency and expert service management. More importantly, they can expect good value from their investment, guided by our strict quality standards and measurable service delivery levels," BayanTel chief information and technology officer Toby Ayre III said in a statement yesterday.

Also, BayanTel launched a "24-hour guarantee" program that ensures service to its clients within 24 hours. Rebates are given when BayanTel technicians fail to address a customer's problems within that timeframe.

"The reception has been really good. It also shows what kind of company BayanTel really is. Even though we're not first-to-market with our services, we always offer the best-to-market services," Olivar said.

He added that, with dominant carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.'s tussle with its major Internet service provider-clients, BayanTel could be an alternative source of leased line services for local ISPs.

"We just want to remind ISPs that they do have a choice. If they're not happy with a particular carrier, we're ready to offer our services to them."

Globe expands Internet data center venture

AYALA-OWNED Globe Telecom Inc. has spent more than P100 million for its new Internet data center (IDC) venture that aims to tap its current corporate customer base, Internet service providers and foreign firms as clients.

Globe's wireline data head Jesus Romero said in a news briefing yesterday that there were many opportunities in the local IDC business although local businesses have yet to actually embrace the concept of entrusting critical company data to an outsider.

"The potential for (the IDC business) is great. People nowadays are actually embracing the concept (of IDCs). The only thing lacking is the companies' action on their interest. The market is very tough. The interest is there but I can't say the same for the demand," he said.

Globe's new IDC service, under its GlobeQuest unit, provides co-location, managed bandwidth, outsourced messaging and web-hosting services to corporate customers.

With co-location, all of a company's critical data are stored in a server located in an area outside the immediate vicinity of its main office. This ensures that a company will still have all of its relevant data even if it gets hit with physical or network disasters.

Globe has an existing IDC in Mandaluyong, and another one in Makati is nearing completion. Its next IDC will be placed in Cebu.

Asked whether Globe's new IDC venture would be directly competing with the Ayala's existing IDC, AyalaPort, Globe's president and chief executive Gerardo Ablaza said in a separate interview that competition would only be up to a certain extent.

"In a way, we'll also be competing with AyalaPort, but we'll basically be targeting our own corporate customers. The IDC is just a natural extension of our existing corporate data services," he told the INQUIRER.

Globe's IDC also boasts of having the "only truly redundant backbone" because its network is connected to three cable systems: Globe's own C2C, the Asia-Pacific Cable Network (APCN) 1 and the APCN 2. It also has "core nodes" in Ortigas, Makati and Manila.

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3:30 - 4:30pm Introduction to LEICA's New Products by: Maedan Enterprises
NOV. 7 (THURSDAY)
10:30 - 11:30am Getting Your Message Across- The Sony Style by: Solid Video
1:00 - 2:00pm PCB Prototyping Machine & PC Scope by: Hakko Philippines
2:15 - 3:15pm Various Products Demo & New Techniques by: Loctite
3:30 - 4:30pm Lead Inspection System by: Benchmark Systems
NOV. 8 (FRIDAY)
10:30 - 11:30am Customized Turnkey Automation Capabilities @ LM Tech (Phil) (a joint venture between the LIONAPEX Group & MARUGO Industries Ltd.) by: L&M Tech - Lionapex
1:00 - 2:00pm ESD Market Trends by: ESD Advanced Technology Corp.
2:15 - 3:15pm Leadfree Finish of Semiconductor Components by:Greenchemicals Corp.
3:30 - 4:30pm Surge Suppression Transformers by: Cebu Sarah Inc.- Digital Network Inc.
NOV. 9 (SATURDAY)
1:00 - 2:00pm Company Profile and Product Introduction by:Nupon Technology
2:15 - 3:15pm Omron Mechatronics of the Philippines Company Profile and Product Presentation by: Omron Mechatronics of the Philippines
3:30 - 4:30pm Flow Injection Analysis for Environmental Monitoring by: Philab Industries

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NOV. 6 (WEDNESDAY)
1:00 - 5:00pm Working Towards Environment Friendly Maintenance Technology (Topics on Air Compressors, Facilities Engineering, Pumps, Electric Motors, Oil & Lubricants, Bearing & Eco-Friendly Refrigerants)

SCHEDULE OF FREE NEW TECHNOLOGY SEMINARS
SEMINAR ROOM 2
NOV. 6 (WEDNESDAY)
2:15 - 3:15pm Manufacturing Test Solutions by: Agilent Technologies
3:30 - 4:30pm Solder Paste Technology for BGA Packages by: Elitech Corporation
NOV. 7 (THURSDAY)
2:15 - 3:15pm Integrated Solid/ Hazardous Waste Management by: PAE Environmental Company
3:30 - 4:30pm Advances in ESD Control, Process Solutions and Cleaning Systems by: Hugle Technologies
NOV. 8 (FRIDAY)
10:30 - 11:30am Innovative System for Manufacturing Processes by: Digi-Software
1:00 - 2:00pm Establishing Competitive Advantage before your competitors do by: Global Implementation Services
2:15 - 3:15pm New Technology from Edgeworth by: Edgeworth Corporation
3:30 - 4:30pm Innovations in X-ray Technology from Phoenix by: SEMATEQ Inc.
NOV. 9 (SATURDAY)
10:30 - 11:30am Industrial Control Valves & Automation by: Tytrade Internationl Corporation
3:30 - 4:30pm Industrial Control Valves & Automation by: Cleval U.S.A.

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Treasury cites top T-bill buyers

THE BUREAU of Treasury has cited 10 foreign and local banks for aggressively lending to the national government in the form of huge purchases of treasury bills and bonds from the regular auctions.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza said Bank of the Philippine Islands, Citibank and Land Bank of the Philippines were the Top three buyers of government securities this year.

Also in the Top 10 were Banco de Oro Savings and Mortgage Bank, BPI Capital, Chinatrust Commercial Bank Corp., Deutsche Bank, Equitable PCI Bank, Security Bank and Trust Co., and Standard Chartered Bank.

Edeza said the Treasury only considered the purchases from the regular auctions.

"We did not consider the purchases from the secondary market because we all know that some banks practice buybacks. And this effectively pads their secondary market performance," the treasurer explained.

The government sells about P30 billion worth of treasury bills and bonds a month to raise money for the cash-strapped government.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, November 6, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	18.5	18.75	18.5	18.75	67,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	42	43.5	42	43.5	952,000
China Banking Corp.	610	610	610	610	50
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	25	25.5	25	25.5	257,400
First E-Bank Corp.	0.81	0.81	0.81	0.81	20,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31.5	31	31	292,100
Philippine National Bank	28	28	28	28	78,100
Security Bank Corp.	11.5	11.75	11.5	11.5	10,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	18.25	18.5	18.25	18.5	3,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	20,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1185	1185	1185	1185	210
Sun Life Financial Serv.	935	935	920	920	180
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17	17.25	17	17.25	11,800
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.41	850,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	405	410	405	410	170,090
ISM Communications Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	300,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.8	40,000
Piltel	0.2	0.22	0.2	0.21	1,360,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	120,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	225	227	224	226	92,210
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	4,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.5	14.5	14.25	14.25	26,000
Manila Electric Co. B	19.75	20	19.75	20	364,000
Petron Corp.	1.48	1.56	1.48	1.56	2,491,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	3,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.16	2.24	2.16	2.24	1,284,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.3	55,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER PRODUCTS RELATED					
Union Cement Corp.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	420,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.16	2.16	2.16	2.16	3,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	13.75	14	13.75	14	411,100
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	32.5	33.5	32.5	33.5	4,656,900
RFM Corp.	0.75	0.76	0.75	0.76	330,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58	57.5	57.5	22,500
San Miguel Corp. B	61.5	63	61.5	63	639,700
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.8	4,619,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.34	2.4	2.34	2.4	1,447,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	3,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	200,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.48	2.48	2.48	2.48	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.2	3,260,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	900,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	349,700
Global Equities Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	200,000
Ionics Inc.	2.02	2.02	1.92	1.92	124,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.32	1.3	1.3	500,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.61	0.62	0.61	0.62	370,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	2,200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.21	0.225	0.21	0.225	1,840,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	3	3	3	3	80,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.77	0.78	0.77	0.78	220,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Euro-Med Lab. Phil. Inc.	4.95	4.95	4.95	4.95	10,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.74	1.82	1.74	1.82	629,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.78	1.84	1.76	1.84	461,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	8,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	820,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.38	240,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	103,500
Jollibee Warrants	13.25	13.25	13.25	13.25	48,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	4.7	5	3.8	3.8	66,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.95	5	4.95	4.95	3,233,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	200,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.15	0.155	0.15	0.155	330,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.87	0.92	0.87	0.91	6,650,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.94	1.94	100,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	2,500,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	300,000
SM Development Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	136,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.5	5.7	5.5	5.7	5,366,000
MINING					
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	300,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	570,000
Omico Corp.	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	0.0022	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	20,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	300,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	1,000,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,000,000

CURRENCIES

Nov. 7, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.999900	1.000000	52.9210
Japan	Yen	0.008206	0.008207	0.4343
United Kingdom	Pound	1.563044	1.563200	82.7261
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.128213	0.128226	6.7858
Switzerland	Franc	0.683833	0.683901	36.1927
Canada	Dollar	0.642156	0.642220	33.9869
Singapore	Dollar	0.569030	0.569087	30.1167
Australia	Dollar	0.561237	0.561293	29.7042
Bahrain	Dinar	2.652325	2.652590	140.3777
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.266640	0.266667	14.1123
Brunei	Dollar	0.567415	0.567472	30.0312
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000109	0.000109	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.023135	0.023137	1.2244
UAE	Dirham	0.272237	0.272264	14.4085
Korea	Won	0.000816	0.000816	0.0432
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.000100	52.9263
Argentina	Real	0.283258	0.283286	14.9918
Brazil	Real	0.281345	0.281373	14.8905
Denmark	Kroner	0.134549	0.134562	7.1212
India	Rupee	0.020723	0.020725	1.0968
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.263167	0.263193	13.9284
Mexico	New Peso	0.098125	0.098135	5.1934
New Zealand	Dollar	0.496056	0.496106	26.2544
Norway	Kroner	0.135917	0.135931	7.1936
Pakistan	Rupee	0.017077	0.017079	0.9038
South Africa	Rand	0.100911	0.100921	5.3408
Sweden	Kroner	0.109249	0.109260	5.7821
Syria	Pound	0.022622	0.022624	1.1973
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.028999	0.029002	1.5348
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000722	0.000722	0.0382

DISCLOSURES

BENGUET Corp. said it is not aware of any material information which would account for the unusual movement in the trading resulting in the change of its share price from P0.30 to P0.45 per share.

* * *

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. said the reported issue of the **Philippine Internet Services Organization**'s nonpayment of its obligations to PLDT was attributed to anonymous sources. As a matter of policy, PLDT does not comment on statements that are not properly attributed. PLDT added that it would immediately respond to PISO's complaint with the National Telecommunications Commission as soon as a copy of the complaint is formally received.

* * *

BENPRES Holdings Corp. stated that although it has not reached an agreement with its creditors on the terms of the restructuring, it would be making certain interest payments in December 2002 on its own initiative. The amounts to be paid were based on rates fixed in accordance with its balance sheet management plan.

ADB earmarks . . .

From page B1

velopment ($40 million); Higher Education Development Project ($42.5 million); and Development of Poor Urban Communities ($33.7 million).

The five projects included for 2004 were: ARMM Basic Education Development; Mindanao Basic Education Development Program ($50 million); Health Sector Development Program ($75 million); Metro Manila Urban Services for the Poor ($50 million), and Rural Roads Development Project ($75 million).

For 2005, the projects in the pipeline were: Integrated Coastal Resources Management Project ($30 million); Solid Waste Management for Metro Manila ($50 million); Road Sector Improvement Project; Fourth Airports Project, and SME Development Project ($25 million).

The government, for its part, would still have to earmark $867.7 million as counterpart funding for the 15 ADB-assisted projects while some $108 million would be sourced from co-financing.

Maynilad asks MWSS to meet its obligations

By Doris C. Dumlao

MAYNILAD Water Services Inc. is pressing state-owned Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) to meet its obligations provided under their concession agreement to help ensure the viability of the private water company's operations.

Maynilad has asked MWSS to, among others, implement the foreign exchange loss recovery mechanism, a measure agreed upon by both parties in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Enrique Quiason, corporate secretary of Maynilad's parent firm Benpres Holdings Corp., said the other obligations MWSS should fulfill included the action plan on service targets, a rate increase to be implemented by January next year and other issues of concern to Maynilad's creditors.

"The deadline for the execution of the agreement that will resolve the above issues, originally set for Jan. 3, 2002, has been repeatedly extended by the MWSS board," Quiason said.

"The subsequent deadlines set for June 30, July 31 and Oct. 31 this year have also lapsed. Maynilad declined further extension of the latest deadline set for next week," Quiason added.

Maynilad, which shouldered bulk of the dollar debts of MWSS, has long been petitioning for a rate increase to recover losses arising from foreign exchange movements.

DTI raises export growth target for this year to 10%

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has raised its export growth target to between 7 percent and 10 percent for this year following a mild spurt in shipments of Philippine manufactured and agriculture goods in the past few months.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II had pegged the export growth target for this year at 4 percent three months ago as the agency remained cautious of a possible relapse in the US economy.

In a statement, Roxas said export figures were showing positive signs of recovery with a conservative rate of 7 percent. Should exports sustain its growth pace in the last three months for the remainder of the year, Roxas said exports could surge by 10 percent for the full year.

Exports jumped 17 percent in September which pushed the overall growth rate to 8.8 percent to $26 billion for the first nine months this year from $23.9 billion during the same period last year. Based on the DTI's revised target, exports should increase to between $34.3 billion and $35.3 billion by year-end from $32.1 billion last year.

"The natural surge in consumption, inventory build-up in the face of uncertainties in the coming year and price sensitivities driven by the inflationary effects of recovering economies indicated that exports would continue to pose strong numbers by the end of the year," Roxas said.

Roxas noted that the country's top two export products posted rosy figures in the first three quarters this year.

Demand for electronic products surged as companies beefed up their inventories due to stronger-than-expected consumer spending on low-cash outlay electronic products in the United States and Japan.

Shipments of garments have increased mainly due to the broadening of the US quota market. Foreign buyers have to tap apparel makers in the Philippines as other countries have either reached their quota allocations or faced troubles in meeting labor standards.

Roxas said the export growth was broad based with desiccated coconut, petroleum products and processed tropical fruits enjoying double-digit increases and the markets diversified with non-core markets such as China, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Singapore chalking up significant increases in the first nine months this year.

These products' growth more than offset the drop in exports of motor vehicle parts, gifts and holiday decors, and pineapples and bananas.

MOODY'S, FITCH RATINGS

BSP says another downgrade likely if revenues stay weak

By Clarissa S. Batino

BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura yesterday said a rating downgrade by two other major international rating agencies—Moody's Investors Service and Fitch Ratings—would not be surprising if government revenue collections would continue to falter beyond September.

With Standard & Poor's downgrade of its outlook for the Philippines last week, Buenaventura said the government was expected to face a tougher borrowing climate next year.

"We can still raise funds but they will be a bit more expensive," said the BSP governor.

Crucial to the decision of the two other global rating firms on the Philippine outlook, according to Buenaventura, would be the revenue collections starting October.

"If they see revenues taking hold in October, there is a good chance that Moody's and Fitch will not change their outlook," said the BSP chief.

The BSP chief hopes the two other rating firms will not hand down a drastic rating downgrade as both affirmed a stable outlook for the Philippines last week. Moody's officials are expected to arrive for a country assessment next month.

The central bank governor, however, is certain that an upgrade in the sovereign rating or in the outlook will be out of reach for quite a while.

"I hope we don't get any more downgrade because that would really cost us more as it will make our borrowings more expensive," said the BSP chief.

The S&P downgrade was largely based on the nine-month deficit of P166.4 billion against an original full-year target of P130 billion.

A negative outlook given by Fitch from late 2000 to early 2001, and that given by Standard and Poor's and Moody's hardly affected the country's access to foreign markets and made very little difference to the borrowing rates. However, Buenaventura said a downgrade at this time would not be without cost.

"It was different back then because there was understanding that we would get an upgrade anytime," said the BSP chief.

Buenaventura said the rating firms had to appreciate the revenue reform measures that were being put in place to reverse the steadily declining collection especially from the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

The government's nine-month fiscal gap was equivalent to 4.1 percent of gross domestic product this year. Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho admitted that the deficit-to-GDP ratio this year would go up to 4.5 percent, which analysts estimated to be around P180 billion.

For 2003, the inter-agency Development Budget Coordinating Committee pegged the budget deficit ceiling at P142.1 billion or 3.3 percent of GDP.

CAP told to sell some assets to meet liquidity requirement

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has told leading pre-need firm College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. to sell some of its assets to comply with the 10-percent liquidity reserve requirement, which is designed to ensure that pre-need companies have enough cash or near-cash assets to cover its planholders' claims as they fall due.

As of Aug. 31, CAP has liquid assets of P919 million, which is P1.4 billion short of the projected P2.337 bilion in benefits payable in 2003.

For the three-year period 2003 to 2005, the SEC said CAP's liquidity reserve would be short by P8.214 billion.

"The company should liquefy some of its assets to cover the projected payments of plans from years 2003 to 2005," the SEC's non-traditional securities instruments department said in a memorandum to the commission.

In line with this, Bank of Commerce, a trustee bank of CAP, proposed to divest all investments in unlisted equities amounting to P3.198 bilion, including P1.5 billion worth of shares in Fil-Estate Management Inc. and P403 million worth of real estate.

The sale of some of its assets is one of the eight conditions that the commission had laid down when it approved last month CAP's application to sell additional P5 billion worth of fixed value education plans.

SEC documents showed that CAP's total liquid assets as of Aug. 31 was also P95 million below the P1.014 billion required by the SEC for that period.

Under the SEC rules, pre-need companies must have liquid assets equal to at least 10 percent of its trust fund. In the case of CAP, its trust fund amounted to P10.143 bilion as of end-August this year.

The other conditions imposed by the SEC on CAP were the following:

- fund the remaining outstanding post-dated checks to boost the trust fund
- file an increase in its authorized capital
- bring down its investments in equities and real estate to 25 percent each by end of this year
- increase investments in government securities to at least 10 percent of the total trust fund equity
- reduce operating expense and cost by 20 percent and 15 percent, respectively
- comply with the net level method of valuation of the actuarial reserves at year-end
- set up a new trust fund account agreement

BOI sees rise in US investments in call center ventures in RP

THE BOARD of Investments reported that more American firms were scouring the Philippines for opportunities in establishing call centers or outsourcing their business operations.

BOI managing head Gregory Domingo said a recent Philippine investment mission to the United States had reported keen interest among American firms in the country's information and communication technology sector.

Domingo said the US companies' interest came about as a result of the increasing awareness among investors of the Philippines' ICT capabilities and the growing trend in corporate America to outsource their back office work and customer care services.

Among the US firms that have shown interest in the Philippine ICT sector were Delta Airlines and Chevron-Texaco.

Domingo reported that Delta Airlines has inked a contract to build a 200-seat call center facility in the country to handle its reservations. He said Delta Airlines would expand its operations if its initial venture would succeed.

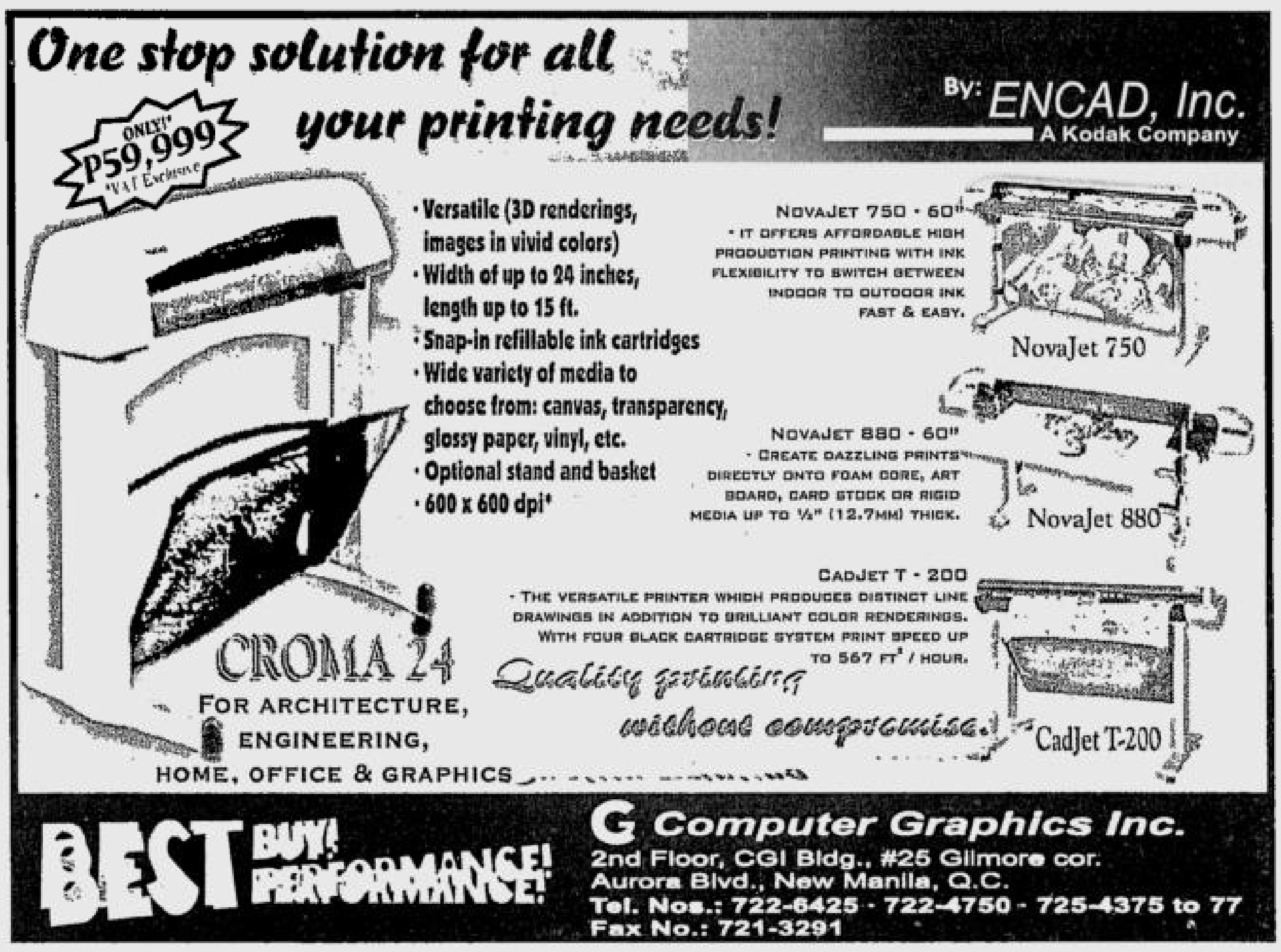
Domingo said that a leading American provider of customer relationship management services, the ICT Group, had unveiled plans of putting up an offshore call center in the Philippines. From an initial 120 to 150 seats, the ICT Group was expected to expand the facility to 3,000 seats within the next three years.

Domingo said another indicator of the Americans' growing attraction to the Philippine ICT sector was the interest of equity fund managers—Warburg Pinkus and Atlantic Partners.

Domingo said that while these American money managers were willing to pour up to $30 million into an ICT firm, there were very few local players big enough for their appetite.

The Macapagal administration had earlier projected a 100-percent growth in the number of call centers in the country to 80 next year.

Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.



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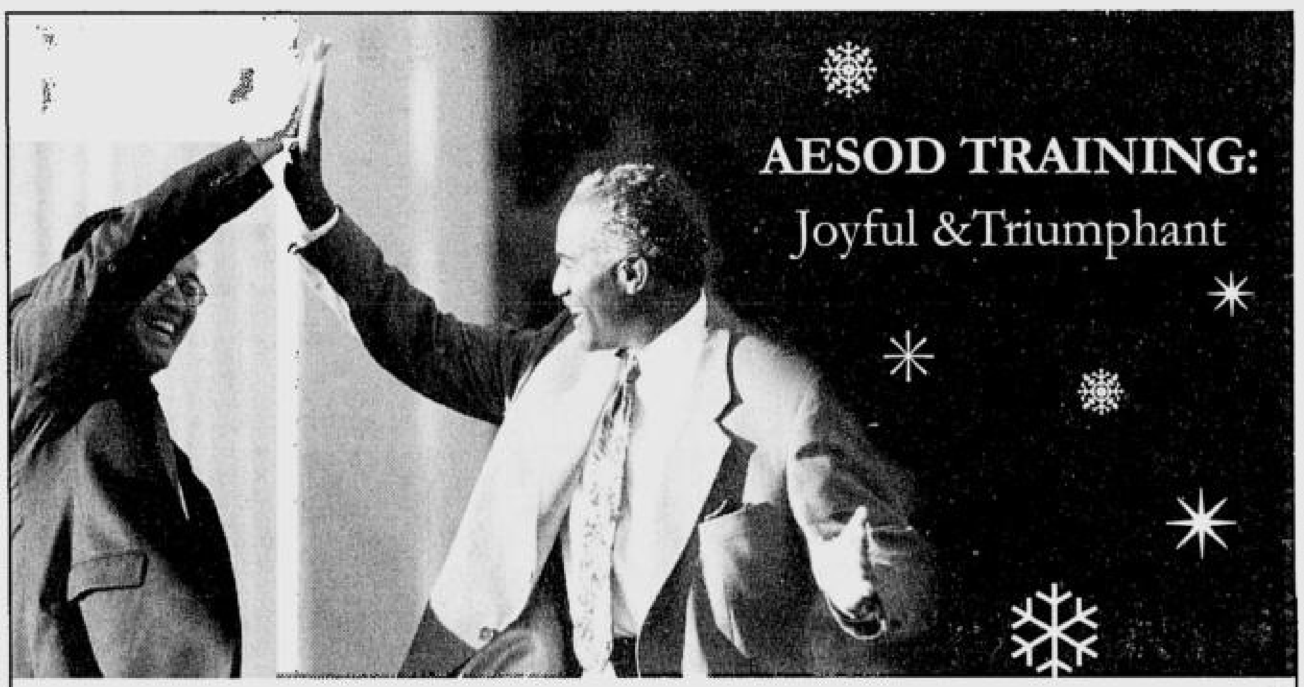

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SERIOUS SECURITY CHALLENGES

WB sees gathering risks for RP, Southeast Asia

SINGAPORE—A serious security challenge in Southeast Asia is just one of a raft of risks facing Asia's economies that will put a greater premium than ever on sound policy-making, the World Bank said on Wednesday.

In a semi-annual overview of the region's economies, the bank tries hard to be optimistic; it expects the number of Asians living on less than $2 a day to fall this year to 41 percent, a record low, and expresses amazement that exports to China from elsewhere in Asia jumped 50 percent in the first half of 2002.

Overall, the Washington-based lender expects economic growth in East Asia to accelerate to 5.4 percent this year and 5.5 percent in 2003 from a sluggish pace of 3.5 percent in 2001.

But the report highlights numerous risks, not least a spate of extremist attacks in the Philippines and Indonesia in recent weeks including a blast on Bali that killed nearly 200 people.

"Governments in Southeast Asia must now grapple with a major security challenge that also has potentially divisive domestic political implications—all at a time when many countries are moving into the next turn of their electoral cycles," the report, entitled "Making Progress in Uncertain Times," said.

With elections due in 2004 in Indonesia, the Philippines and Malaysia, governments may be tempted by populist policies that are bad economics or could shy away from bold steps close to the polls.

"A loss of focus on development and reform priorities could result," the World Bank said.

Other risks include heightened uncertainty about the global economic outlook, as reflected in a sharp drop recently in US semiconductor orders; the possible spillover of emerging market turmoil from Latin America; and a spike in oil prices in the event of an Iraq war. Asia imports 40 percent of its crude oil.

"Any one of these risks taken individually might have a significantly adverse but probably manageable impact," the bank said. But it added: "The joint occurrence of several (risks) could create as severe a global or regional shock as any in the post-war period."

Sustaining growth in such a difficult environment would depend more than ever on the quality of countries' own policies and institutions, the World Bank argued.

Here, too, the tone of the report is subdued. Companies have failed to work off excessive debts, while most governments need to deepen corporate and financial sector reforms; this is all the more important as private sector investment remains weak.

At the same time, governments face demands for better-quality public goods and services—not least for better law and order—which makes improvements in governance, administration and public financial accountability critical, the report said.

"There is now open discussion and acknowledgement of these issues in the region, but the pace of reform is slow, except in Korea, Malaysia and Singapore," it said.

On the bright side, the proportion of Asians living below the $2-a-day poverty threshold has dropped to 41 percent from 50 percent in 1999 in the aftermath of the Asian financial crisis. The bank expects a further decline next year to 39 percent.

Yet progress is decidedly mixed. Whereas there are now 130 million more Chinese earning $2 a day than in 1996, reducing the country's poverty headcount to 39 percent from 52 percent, the ranks of the poor in Thailand and the Philippines have swollen over the same period, the World Bank said. *Reuters*

DTI drops plan to allow imports of trucks, buses

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry has given in to the lobbying of automotive assemblers and dropped its plan to liberalize the importation of used light trucks and buses.

A DTI source said the agency has agreed to maintain the status quo on its policy on used truck and bus imports which strictly regulated the entry of second-hand trucks with a gross vehicle weight of at least 4.5 tons and buses weighing at least 6 tons.

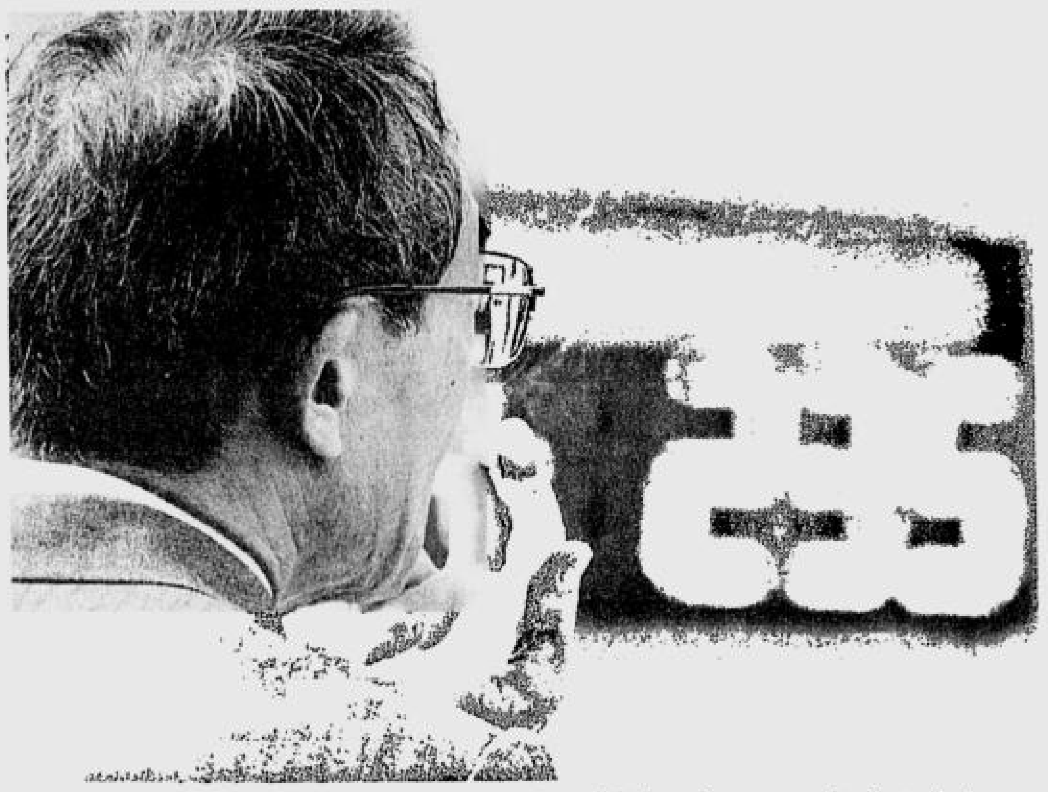
The DTI had earlier announced that it would liberalize the importation of trucks and buses by allowing light trucks and buses to give small and medium enterprises and local government units greater access to cheap vehicles.

The policy change would mean that only trucks and buses weighing at least 6 tons and 12 tons, respectively, would be allowed for importation.

The Truck Manufacturers Association (TMA) and the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) have vigorously opposed the liberalization of used light truck and bus imports because of its "harsh" impact on local assemblers.

The combined sales of light truck models—Mitsubishi's Canter, Kia Cab Chassis and the Isuzu Elf—accounted for 6 percent of the total 76,670 units sold last year.

TMA warned that the DTI's plan to liberalize the importation of used light trucks and buses would create a big loophole for traders to bring in not only light trucks but also full-sized pickups and sport utility vehicles such as Ford Expeditions.



A JAPANESE man looks up as a stock quotation board flashes the current rise in stocks in a Tokyo business district. The benchmark Nikkei average ended trade on Tuesday with its biggest gain in three weeks, surging 2.90 percent or 251.84 points to 8,937.56. REUTERS

DOE taps car firms to push fuel efficiency

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy yesterday said it has tapped auto makers Honda Cars Philippines Inc., Toyota Motors Philippines Corp. and Isuzu Philippines Inc. to promote vehicle designs geared toward the more efficient use of fuel.

The DOE made the announcement during the pre-launching of the DOE Asian Utility Vehicle Fuel Economy Run in Fort Bonifacio.

Energy Undersecretary Benhur C. Salcedo said DOE AUV Run 2002 also aims to get the support of car manufacturers in promoting and producing fuel-efficient vehicles.

The DOE said that a recent study made by the United States government showed that only about 13 percent of the fuel in a vehicle's tank is used to actually move the car while the rest is used up in engine idling.

US Fed seen cutting interest rates to 40-yr lows

WASHINGTON—In a bid to ward off some of the chill settling over the slow-moving US economic recovery, Federal Reserve policymakers were widely predicted to cut US interest rates to fresh four-decade lows on Wednesday.

An overwhelming majority of Wall Street analysts expect the US central bank's Federal Open Market Committee, set to begin meeting at 9 a.m., to lower rates for the first time this year in the face of evidence showing the economy's pace is rapidly cooling.

The meeting was delayed by a day because of US congressional elections.

"No monetary policymaker wants to see this economy slide back into another recession," said economist Lynn Reaser of Banc of America Capital Management Inc. in St. Louis, Mo.

"It now appears that monetary policy is facing a significant loss of confidence and that is likely to make the Fed inclined to provide some offset," Reaser said, adding the most likely FOMC outcome seemed to be a quarter-percentage-point cut in the trend-setting federal funds rate to 1.50 percent.

A poll by Reuters on Friday of primary dealers—Wall Street firms that deal directly with the Fed—found fully 19 out of 20 predict the Fed will try to energize the sluggish recovery with a jolt of cheaper credit.

Fourteen saw a quarter-percentage-point reduction, while five foresaw a more aggressive half-point slash.

At the last meeting of the FOMC on Sept. 24, policymakers opted to keep rates unchanged, but two voting members of the committee broke ranks and urged an immediate rate cut.

The US economy completed four quarters of expansion through this year's third quarter, averaging about a 3-percent annual rate of growth after contracting for three straight quarters at the beginning of 1991.

But the recovery has hinged on consumers' willingness to keep spending on new cars, homes and other goods, while businesses have been reluctant to step up the plate by boosting investment—and in fact have helped undercut consumers through vigorous cost-cutting, layoffs and delayed hiring.

Labor Department figures issued last Friday showed 5,000 fewer US jobs in October, a second straight month of sliding payrolls. And on Monday, the outplacement firm Challenger, Gray and Christmas Inc. said the number of planned job cuts announced by US companies shot up to 176,010 last month—about 7,600 jobs lost every business day. *AP*

WorldCom sees $9-B restatement

PHILADELPHIA—WorldCom Inc. on Tuesday said it expects to restate more than $9 billion in earnings, as it faced additional charges of fraud filed by the Securities and Exchange Commission for misleading investors about its financial health since at least 1999.

WorldCom said it is in talks with the SEC to settle charges it committed securities fraud by manipulating its financial records.

A settlement would impose a nominal fine on WorldCom and require the company to agree not to violate securities laws in the future, the sources said.

The SEC originally charged WorldCom in June with accounting fraud that totaled more than $3.8 billion, but since then the company has said it uncovered another $3.8 million in errors and warned that additional adjustments to its financial statements were likely.

The SEC's amended charges cover the expanded amount and time frame of the accounting scandal.

A settlement would eliminate a major legal problem plaguing WorldCom, and give it a greater chance of emerging from bankruptcy as a viable company, legal and financial experts said.

"It's a critical prerequisite for its survival," said James Owers, professor of finance at Georgia State University and an expert on corporate restructurings.

"If they don't come to terms with the SEC, then many parties essential to the survival of WorldCom as a workable entity will not be playing along," Owers said.

A settlement would also lessen the threat that the company itself, rather than just a few rogue former executives, would be indicted for wrongdoing, the sources said.

Officials from WorldCom, which filed for the world's largest bankruptcy in July, and the SEC declined to comment on the terms or timing of any settlement.

Clinton, Mississippi-based WorldCom still faces several shareholder lawsuits and investigations by various Congressional committees. The United States attorney's office in New York also is investigating WorldCom executives.

Meanwhile, the settlement would come at a time when SEC Chairman Harvey Pitt faces criticism for his handling of the appointment of a new head of an accounting oversight board.

The exact amount of any fine to be paid in the settlement would be determined after the various investigations into WorldCom's conduct concluded, they said. *Reuters*

Japan's Koizumi defends controversial loan plan

TOKYO—Japan's economic recovery will be further delayed if Japanese banks do not dispose of their enormous pile of bad loans, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi told Parliament Wednesday.

"The economy's recovery will be put back even more if we don't dispose of bad loans. This is why we are carrying out the bad-loan cleanup," Koizumi said in a parliamentary debate with opposition leaders.

Kazuo Shii, the head of the Communist Party of Japan, said forcing banks to dispose of the bad loans would lead bankruptcies to surge and hurt the economy.

Koizumi's administration has argued in the past that although some bankruptcies may occur, the cleanup is needed to lift the banking industry, and thus the rest of the economy, out of its slump.

Japan's major banks are burdened by some 42 trillion yen ($344 billion) in bad loans that have weakened them financially and reduced their ability to lend to companies, ultimately aiding economic growth.

Koizumi has made clearing the bad loans out of the banking system a centerpiece of his plan for reviving the economy, which has stagnated for over a decade since the asset "bubble" of inflated real estate and stock prices burst in the early 1990s.

In recent years, deflation has compounded Japan's economic woes by eroding corporate profits and wages. Persistent price declines have also dragged asset values down even more, while simultaneously raising the burden of debt—all factors that have helped increase the bad loans on banks' books.

The government has prepared numerous stimulus spending packages and plans to accelerate banks' bad loan disposals over the years, but none has rejuvenated the economy as hoped.

Meanwhile, Japanese households spent 5.4 percent more in September than a year earlier, a fourth straight month of gains and adding to views that Japan's economy expanded for a second straight quarter in July to September.

But tempering the news and adding to uncertainty over Japan's economic outlook, a government official said a leading index likely fell in October below the "boom or bust" threshold of 50 following a rise in inventories and recent stock price falls.

The mixed signals on Japan's struggling economy come a week before the government is due to announce data on third quarter gross domestic product (GDP)—the broadest measure of economic activity.

Since consumption accounts for about 55 percent of GDP, the healthy spending figures come as some relief for the world's second-largest economy, where a seven-month-old export-driven recovery has shown signs of losing steam. *AP, Reuters*

Embattled US SEC Chairman Pitt resigns amid turmoil

WASHINGTON—US Securities and Exchange Commission Chairman Harvey Pitt resigned on Tuesday night amid turmoil inside his markets-policing agency and a chorus of demands in Congress for his ouster, immediately prompting speculation about a successor.

Pitt served as top US markets regulator for 15 tumultuous months, witnessing the Sept. 11 attacks that shuttered Wall Street, a rash of corporate scandals, a stubborn bear market and a massive securities law overhaul in Congress.

Last week, Pitt came under pressure to step aside for failing to tell SEC commissioners and the White House that his choice to head a new accounting oversight board, ex-FBI chief William Webster, had chaired the audit committee of a company facing fraud accusations.

"It is with deep regret that I have decided to tender my resignation to you as chairman, and a member, of the Securities and Exchange Commission, effective as soon as I can help your staff ensure a smooth transition of leadership," Pitt said in a letter sent to President George W. Bush on Election Day.

White House spokesperson Claire Buchan said Bush accepted Pitt's resignation. "We did have indications he was considering this over the last couple of days," Buchan said.

White House officials said Pitt made the decision on his own and was not pushed. "We did not ask him to step aside," an official said.

In his letter, the burly, Brooklyn-born lawyer wrote:

"Unfortunately the turmoil surrounding my chairmanship and the agency makes it very difficult for the commissioners and dedicated SEC staffers to perform their critical assignments.

Rather than be a burden to you or the agency, I feel it is in everyone's best interest if I step aside now, to allow the agency to continue the important efforts we have started."

SEC spokesperson Christi Harlan said Pitt would stay on through a transition period. No interim chairman has been named to replace him, she added.

Possible successors to Pitt could include former top SEC lawyer James Doty, corporate lawyer Gary Lynch or former Federal Judge Stanley Sporkin, sources said earlier this week.

However, sources also said a replacement would not be needed right away, and an interim chairman might be appointed from among two remaining Republican commissioners—Paul Atkins and Cynthia Glassman. Both have refused to comment on that possibility and could not be reached Tuesday.

Sen. Paul Sarbanes, the Maryland Democrat who co-authored landmark legislation passed in July that ordered the creation of the accounting board and many other reforms, said he had twice called for Pitt's resignation.

"I am pleased we are moving forward, and we hope the White House will nominate a top reformer, who will enforce the provisions of Sarbanes-Oxley," he said through a spokesperson.

The accounting board episode was just the latest in a series of stumbles by Pitt.

Pitt was hounded by his past as an elite Wall Street lawyer, although he had started his career at the SEC and said he had a deep loyalty to the agency.

Pitt's resignation came after White House officials lost confidence in him amid the flap over the accounting board, set up by the SEC to crack down on auditors and bolster market confidence after a rash of business scandals that started last fall with energy trader Enron Corp. *Reuters*

Your own gas station for P180K

IF YOU happen to encounter a mom-and-pop type gas station in some far-flung province, chances are it's a filling station set up by either Genergex or Zenergex Petroleum—two very similar companies put up by identical twin brothers Tony and Gerry Malixi. Tony's Zenergex is based in Makati while Gerry's Genergex is based in Cebu City.

Tony and Gerry has set the trend as far as affordable diesel filling stations all over the country is concerned. For a small investment of P180,000 (inclusive of equipment and installation), you can now own and operate your own gas station anywhere in Luzon, Cebu, Leyte or Samar.

Tony and Gerry set up Zenergex Fuels (Zx) and Genergex Petroleum (Gx) less than four years ago, and already these twin companies have sold 50 filling stations all over Luzon and a combined 18 stations in Cebu, Leyte and Samar.

RA 8479, the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Act of 1998, paved the way for small oil traders like Zx and Gx to flourish all over the Philippines. Arguably, the most successful of the "masa"-type filling stations have been built by these twins.

"What used to be reserved for the privileged few is now available to the small entrepreneur. Years ago, you had to be a millionaire to run a gas station. Now the ordinary Juan de la Cruz can mix it up with the big boys," Gerry explains.

"Not only are our dealers selling high-quality, low-sulfur petroleum products imported from Singapore, we are also selling the cheaper by an average of P0.30 per liter. A typical jeepney consumes at least 30 liters a day. That's a savings of P9 a day, the lunch budget of some drivers," adds Tony.

Gerry and Tony dream of becoming the "Jollibee of gas stations" one day. Business is so good, they say, Tony recently flew to the United States just to purchase 80 fuel dispensing pumps to keep up with the demand.

Gerry and Tony are still guided by their healthy 76-year-old father, Pablo Malixi, a 40-year veteran of the oil industry having been a senior vice president pf PNOC amd ex-Napocor president under the Aquino administration.

Tony credits Ces Drilon for the meteoric rise of their business. "It was very tough in the beginning, convincing people to get into this business. But when Ces Drilon featured us on 'Usapang Business' years ago, business just started to fly."

Recently, popular soap actress Kristine Hermosa flew to Cebu to act as a "pump girl" for Gerry's four stations in Mandaue, Consolacion, Cebu City and Liloan.

A few of Tony's industrial customers are Cosmos, Selecta, Arce Dairy and several bus and manufacturing companies. Gerry's Gx is also the reason the bird sanctuary of Olango Island (8 minutes off Mactan) now has 24-hour power since Gerry recently signed an MOA with Salcon Power to supply diesel fuel to the island. Gx's other customers include the Provincial Government of Cebu, Gaisano Country Mall, and Socor Shipping. Zx and Gx combined sell an average of 3 million liters of diesel, unleaded, jet fuel and kerosene.

For interested dealers in Luzon, call Zx at 815-0243. For Cebu, call Gx at (032)343-7639 or 95.

FAMILIARIZATION TOUR IN SHANGHAI

The top 10 domestic accredited cargo agents of Philippine Airlines flew to Shanghai for a 4-day Fam Tour Oct. 15 to 18. This is part of the incentives given by PAL to its loyal supporters as an appreciation of their continued patronage and to create a stronger relationship among its clients in promoting healthy competition. The group was composed of 14 participants: Mr and Ms Manolo Alcasabas of Allied Airfreight, Mr and Ms Antonio Feliciano of Gemalin Enterprises, Joseph Chiu of Highlight Express, and Aniec Dungog of Fastpak Global, all gold awardees; Recto Entero of Airspeed, which won the silver award; and bronze awardees Mr and Ms Rodrigo de Guia of Redgold Forwarders, Ma. Lucia Mondragon of Libcap, Ana Patinio of WWW Express, Al Amorado of U-freight Philippines, and Togie Cubil of Aspac. Jerry Calaluan, domestic cargo sales manager, was PAL representative during the tour.

Nutri-Licious expands product line

NUTRI-Licious Foods Corp. (NFC), one of the country's leading manufacturers and exporters of premium fruit juices and other beverages, expands its beverage line with the introduction of new products this year. These are Koolca Fun Drink in 200 ml PP cups, Calamansi with Honey Premium in 600 ml PET bottle, Mango Premium and Lemon Iced Tea Premium, both in 200 ml PP cups and 600 ml PET bottles.

According to Arlene Llagas, NFC marketing head, the move is in line with the company's thrust of providing Filipino consumers with more choices of premium beverages which are healthy and delicious.

Koolca Fun Drink, delicious and ready-to-drink for kids and students, comes in Gum Blast and Pomelo Loco flavors. Calamansi with Honey, on the other hand, is available in two types: ready-to-drink and concentrate. Mango Premium is a nutritious drink made from the freshest and finest mangoes, while the Lemon Iced Tea is a delicious and refreshing thirst-quencher.

"These products, apart from being export-quality, are created under strict NFC standards and formulated to cater to Filipino tastes. We see to it that products meet the consumers' standards, both locally and internationally, by making use of the finest and high-quality raw materials," Llagas said.

Nutri-licious products have been in the market for 16 years. Aside from key retail outlets, these products are also served in fastfood chains, hospitals and airlines.

HONDA FIESTA

Festive mood at Sta. Rosa plant caps 12 years of quality operations

HONDA Cars Philippines Inc. recently celebrated its 12th anniversary of operations in the country. Dubbed "Honda Fiesta", the Sta. Rosa plant facilities took on a Filipino festive mood, donning colorful tents and buntings. Honda associates, along with their families, took part in the festivities which included parades, fun games and entertainment. Various awards for service and quality were also presented to outstanding associates. The "Honda Fiesta" is a way of sharing Honda's success with its most valuable asset, its associates, who are behind each and every quality product.

HONDA awards associates for outstanding service.

FAMILIES of Honda associates take part in the revelry.

HONDA Cars Philippines Inc. president and general manager Mitsunari Takano welcomes guests and associates to the Honda Fiesta.

BITS & Clips

Bedan homecoming concert

EXPECT an electrifying evening down memory lane as the San Beda College High School Class '78 Foundation presents the popular disco music of the '60 and '70s with the Q&A Band, Leah Navarro and Renz Verano in a concert titled "Countdown to 2003" (a pre-homecoming Bedan musical special) on Friday, Nov. 22, 7 p.m. at the SBC Quadrangle. This event is sponsored by Pagcor, Aboitiz Shipping, ABS Bitter Herbs, San Miguel Corp., Equitable PCI-Bank, Globe, Dole, United Laboratories and Centennial Bank. Tickets at P200 are now available at the SBC Alumni Office. For more information, call 735-5995 and look for professor Joffre Alajar or Wilma, and lawyer Banjo Navarro at 633-4157 to 59.

First CWG, Acim spiritual foundation

THE HIGHEST Vision Foundation Inc., the first spiritual organization based largely on what are considered two of the world's most powerful spiritual books, "Conversations With God" and "A Course in Miracles", is now set up as a duly registered non-stock, non-profit foundation and is set to hold its first meeting on Nov. 15, 6 p.m. at Powerbooks, Arnaiz Avenue, Makati. The public is invited. Admission is free. Sharing their insights in their journey to spiritual enlightenment are Jesuit priest Fr. Joey de Leon, Inner Mind Development Institute founding president Jimmy T. Licauco, and Inner Peace Foundation founding president Regina Y. Dee. Confirm your attendance with Luwee at 842-4904, William at 0919-7779173, or Sonny at fax 922-3361. For more information, visit www.geocities.com/dustyriggs/HVFmain.html.

Bazaars at Edsa Shangri-la

PHILTRADE Exhibits is hosting the 4th Angel Sent Bazaars at Edsa Shangri-la Hotel on Nov. 17, Dec. 14 and 15, and Dec. 21 and 22. The Bazaar promises to give a wide array of products for shoppers to choose from. Buyers can get big discounts from producers of export products, and select importers and wholesalers of products such as Christmas decors and decorative accessories, arts and crafts, domestics and textiles, jewelry and fashion accessories, house ware, personal care products, table tops, toys and games, candles and scents, ready to wear, regional delicacies and select delicatessen, beverages, tours travel and holiday destinations. The Bazaar opens at 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. at the lower lobby of Edsa Shangri-la Hotel. For details, call 820-7879 or 820-1570.

WOMEN COUNCIL FROM BICOL

The Bicol delegation headed by Irene A. Solmirano is shown during the Conference on Local Councils of Women at Las Brisas Hotel, Antipolo City from Sept. 30-Oct. 2.

Product FILES

A new level of viewing with Sony Plasma Monitor

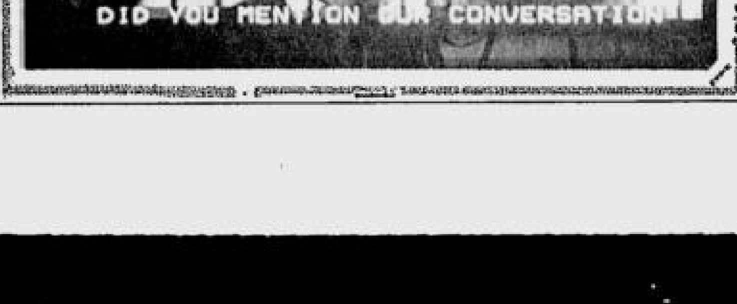
THE NEW Sony PFM-42B1E Plasma Monitor takes TV viewing to a higher plane with a 42-inch monitor that delivers top-class picture quality.

The Sony Plasma Monitor's simple yet sophisticated appearance suits every style. Its two colors—silver and dark gray—will look right at home in any family room. With a depth of just 83 mm, the flat panel monitor can be arranged in any way desired—in a stand, on a wall or hung from the ceiling, either horizontally or vertically for striking visuals with outstanding viewer impact.

The PFM-42B1E uses a high-resolution flat panel with 1024x1024 pixels to achieve excellent brightness and contrast and produce sharp, detailed images with rich and natural colors. With the Sony original I/P (Interlace/Progressive) conversion technology, the viewer will enjoy precise and smooth images throughout the screen while the anti-reflection coating on the glass panel reduces light reflection for clear, high-contrast pictures.

Other features of the Sony Plasma Monitor include six-language on-screen display, selectable aspect ratio, size control, picture zoom, memory save/load, various remote control capabilities, easy maintenance access, 24-hour on/off timer and worldwide power supply range.

The new Sony Plasma Monitor is available at all Avid Sony Shops. For more information, call 525-2215 and 525-3634.



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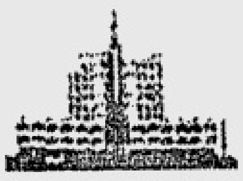

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Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late APOLONIA M. REYES was settled extrajudicially by the heirs as per Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement and Adjudication per Doc. No. 630, Page No. 45, Book II, Series of 2002 before Atty Arturo M. Marin, Notary Public, Quezon City
(PDI-Oct.24,31&Nov.7,2002)

Notice is hereby given that GOVIND RAI SANCHER, an Indian Citizen son of SPS. FAQIR CHAND and AM ARJEET SANCHER, presently residing in Victory Norte, Santiago City and GOVIND RAI a holder of Indian Passport No. E 1008000 Issued by Indian Embassy, Manila, Philippines on October 23, 2002 is one and the same person.

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Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID AD NO. PD2002-23

Opening Date : November 15, 2002 – 9:00 AM
E-Bidding Date : November 22, 2002 – 9:00 AM

2002-23-01 OFFICE SUPPLIES (Bond Paper, Newsprint, Ink Cartridge, Toner, Continuous Forms, Fastener, Staple Wire,Binder, Transparency Film Correction Fluid, Receptacle, Storage Box, Molar File Folder, Record Book, Kraft Envelope, Bristol Board, NPC Purchase Requisition Form, etc.)

(To be purchased thru Open-Purchase Order for a period of six months starting January, 2003.)

Interested parties are invited to apply for eligibility and to submit sealed bids on the above to be opened publicly at the Sampaguita Rm. Ground Floor Bldg. 2 NPC-OBC, Quezon Avenue cor. Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

Eligibility forms and bidding documents are available on **October 28,2002** at the Accreditation, Bidding & IT Services, Procurement & Contracting Division, Materials Management Department upon payment of **P50.00** per schedule which is non refundable and presentation of **TIN/supplier's number (DCE).**

Issuance of eligibility forms and bidding documents **mornings only, 8:30 to 11:30 A.M.** For inquiries please call no. 921-25-74. Last day of issuance of bidding documents **November 11, 2002.**

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT
NPC-OBC (Head Office)
Diliman, Quezon City

(PDI - Oct. 29 & Nov. 7, 2002)

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Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258
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Calsadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila; Tels. 642-6181 to 82
HERITAGE PARK
Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Tels. (DL) 845-2341 to 42; (TL) 845-2334 to 38 loc. 110/112
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Manila #23 Palo St., Project 2, Quezon City; Tel. 434-3258
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1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila;
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LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon City
Tels. 749-3808 to 11; 712-3001; 743-6502 or 05
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque; Tels. 820-1592; 825-9947; 825-8635
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79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City; Tel. (074) 443-3337; (074) 442-3117
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MT. SINAI MEMORIAL CHAPEL
Arellano St., Dagupan City;
Tels. (075) 515-5960; 515-6529; 522-8783; (0919) 348-7131
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Ground Flr. Rolling Hills Chapel, 27th-Lacson St., Mandalagan, Bacolod City; Tel. 433-7132
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438 Cementina St., Pasay City; Tels. 831-1204
Sucat Branch: 8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376; 826-9682; (0915) 712-1220
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Forbes Park, Makati City; Tel. Nos. 843-8838/30; Fax No 843-9223
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City; Telefax 724-4138; 725-2044
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City; Tels 852-8228; 852-7284
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16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila;
Tels. 749-3679; 781-1772
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City; Tels. 372-5084; 410-9286/87
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WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila;
Tels. 522-8846; 522-9438; 400-5394

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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"And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD; it shall rejoice in His salvation."

Psalms 35:9

BENJAMIN "BEN" RAÑOA MADRASTO, SR.

Certified Public Accountant

Born on November 29, 1922; of Pangil, Laguna and of Cubao, Quezon City has peacefully joined his Creator after receiving the last sacrament on November 3, 2002 at age of 79.

He was a member of Class '41 of Laguna High School and of Far Eastern University BS Commerce 1949. A 4th Degree Member of the Padre Burgos Assembly and an Honorary Life Member of the Knights of Columbus Manila Council 1000. A former Assistant Division Chief of the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

He was a loving husband to wife **Marina "Nena" Padilla Madrasto**; a wonderful father to his children – **Lito & Nannie, Jun & Ruby, Tess, Rose** (†) and **Nardy & Riza**; an inspiration to his grandchildren, **Marquis & Jenni, Coco, Maan, Chiqui** and **John Reuben**. The whole family, together with his brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews, relatives and friends, request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose and happiness of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at 82 Harvard St., Barangay E. Rodriguez, Cubao, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, November 9, 2002 at Heaven's Gate, Antipolo, Rizal after the 9:00 AM Mass at his residence.

Catalina Gaetos Tan

Peacefully joined our Creator on October 31, 2002 in Vallejo, California, USA at the age of 90.

Her remains will arrive on Friday, November 8, 2002 and will lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City.

Her loving husband **Jose L. Tan** (+); children **Arthur & Rosalita Vizconde, Leticia, Jeffrey & Luz Consuelo Garabato, Peter** (+); grandchildren **Pia Gracinia, John Paul, Alexander & Anthony**; brothers & sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for her eternal repose.

Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on Sunday, November 10, 2002 after the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass at Loyola Memorial Chapels.

> **"Eternal life will swallow up that which can die. God made us for this very reason and He has given us the Spirit as a guarantee that we will live again."**
>
> **2 Corinthians 5:4-5**

CLASSIFIEDS

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF PROTOCOL ANALYZERS** for the **BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE.**

The approved budget for this contract is P 4,043,520.00.

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-bid Conference** that will be held on **November 15, 2002, 9:30 a.m. at the PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **November 4, 2002** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Two Thousand Pesos (Php 2,000.00).**

The bidders shall submit their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes at the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **December 3, 2002 at 9:30 a.m.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. **561-6098** or **563-9402.**

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI – Oct. 31 & Nov. 7, 2002)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILTY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF FORKLIFT, 15 TON for the SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY.**

The approved budget for this contact is P4,320,000.00.

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held on **November 15, 2002, 1:30 p.m.** at the **PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **November 4, 2002** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **Two Thousand Pesos (Php2,000.00).**

The bidders shall submit their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes at the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **December 3, 2002 at 1:30 p.m.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at Telephone Nos. **561-6098** or **563-9402.**

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **EDUARDO P. OPIDA**
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI - Oct. 31 & Nov. 7, 2002)

PNOC PETROCHEMICAL DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
(A WHOLLY OWNED SUBSIDIARY OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY)

11/F, BA Lepanto Building
8747 Paseo de Roxas
1227 Makati City, Philippines
Tel. No.: 892-0293
893-8127
Fax No.: 892-0329
810-0026

INVITATION TO REGISTER, APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PNOC Petrochemical Development Corporation (PPDC) invites interested contractors currently in good standing, to register, apply for eligibility and if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the following project described below:

I. *Work Order No.* : WSA-01-029r1

II. *Project Title* : **Two (2) Year Supply of Security Services for Petrochemical Park Limay / Mariveles, Bataan**

III. *Scope of Work* : To guard and protect all personnel / employees as well as premises and properties of the company from theft, pilferage, robbery, arson, trespass / informal dwellers, bodily harm and other unlawful acts.

To assign and provide PPDC with 40 competent security personnel (36 security guards and 4 officers) and 6 support personnel (3 driver-mechanics and 3 radio operators) for PPDC Mariveles and Limay.

To provide various equipment, facilities, trainings, and other services necessary and essential in carrying out the security services.

Strictly comply with all rules, regulations, special / general orders administrative guidelines of PPDC during their tour of duties.

IV. *Project Location* : Petrochemical Park in Limay, Mariveles, Bataan

V. *Approved Budget* : Pesos Twelve Million Six Hundred Sixty Six Thousand Six Hundred Sixty Two and 88/100 (P 12,666,662.88)

VI. *Source of Funding* : PNOC – Petrochemical Development Corporation

VII. *Estimated Contract Duration* : Two (2) Years

VIII. *Similar Contracts* : At least one (1) year Supply of Security Services for Industrial Parks, Techno Parks, Export Processing Zone

IX. Registration

Date of Registration : October 30 – November 12, 2002 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Place of Issuance : PNOC Petrochemical Development Corporation
11/F BA Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
c/o BAC Secretariat

Requirements : Submit certified true copies of the following basic requirements signed by the prospective bidder or its duly authorized representative together with the original copies for validation:

- Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) business name registration or Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registration certificate, whichever may be appropriate under existing laws of the Philippines
- Mayor's Permit / Municipal License
- Taxpayer's Identification Number
- Notarized statement of the prospective bidder that it is not "blacklisted" or barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation
- BIR VAT Registration
- Current PNP License to Operate (for Year 2002)
- Current PADPAO Certificate of Membership
- DOLE Clearance / Certification (of no pending cases)
- DOLE Certificate of Registration
- SSS Clearance
- Notarized statement under oath by the prospective bidder or its duly authorized representative that each of the documents submitted is an original copy or a true and faithful reproduction / copy of the original

X. *Eligibility Statement Forms & Bid Documents* : One (1) set each to be filled up and submitted

Non-Refundable Cost of Forms & Bid Documents : Two Hundred Pesos each set (P 200.00 / set)

Date of Issuance : October 30 - November 12, 2002 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Place of Issuance : PNOC Petrochemical Development Corporation
11/F BA Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
c/o BAC Secretariat
or
PNOC Petrochemical Development Corporation
Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan
c/o Site Administration Department

XI. *Pre-Bid Conference*

Date and Time : November 13, 2002 at 9:30 a.m.

Place : PNOC Petrochemical Development Corporation
Petrochem Park, Batangas Dos, Mariveles, Bataan
c/o Site Administration Department

XII. *Submission of Accomplished Eligibility Forms / Bid Documents*

Deadline of Submission : November 27 2002 at 9:30 a.m.

Place : PNOC Petrochemical Development Corporation
11/F BA Lepanto Building, 8747 Paseo de Roxas, Makati City
c/o BAC Secretariat

XIII. **PUBLIC OPENING OF BIDS SHALL FOLLOW IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DEADLINE OF SUBMISSION OF BIDS. LATE BIDS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

All bids must be valid for one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from the date of opening of bids.

All bids must be accompanied by a bid security valid for one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from the date of opening of bids equivalent to the amount, and in the form acceptable to PPDC as indicated in the Instructions to Bidders.

All particulars relative to registration, eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the provisions of Executive Order No. 40 and its Approved Implementing Rules and Regulations.

This cancels and supercedes the Invitation to Register, Apply for Eligibility and to Bid issued on July 23 and 30, 2002

All those interested bidders earlier registered by PPDC need not undergo registration again.

PPDC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or informality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PPDC. PPDC further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or loss they may incur in the preparation of their bid nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

Signed this 28th day of October, 2002 in Makati City.

(Sgd.) **VICTORIO MARIO A. DIMAGIBA**
BAC Chairman

(PDI - Oct 30 & Nov. 7, 2002)

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MOTORING

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Is RP willing to pay for cleaner air?

By Charles E. Buban

AS THE JAN. 1 deadline compelling oil companies to adhere to the new fuel standards set by the Clean Air Act approaches, the government is now faced with a dilemma. It should choose whether or not to postpone the said implementation that could well improve the quality of the air we breathe but as a consequence would jack up pump and transport prices.

It was in 1999 when the Clean Air Act was passed to reduce the amount of environmentally harmful substances in gasoline and diesel.

It requires oil refiners to cut the aromatic and benzene contents of gasoline from 45 percent and 4 percent to 35 percent and 2 percent by 2003. It also mandates the reduction of sulfur in diesel from 0.2 percent to 0.05 percent by 2004.

The first phase of the law was implemented without much resistance in December 2000 with the removal of leaded gasoline. But with the next requirement approaching deadline, its implementation could be a lot harder.

Voicing out concern

Voicing out their concern, the Asian Management Institute Policy Center, said oil price hikes seem imminent with the implementation of the Act next year.

The country's top management education institution reported that Petron, Caltex and Shell, three largest oil firms here, will have to retool their refineries to be able to deliver the required fuel specification—a move that could cost these companies around $20 to $60 million which will eventually be borne by their consumers.

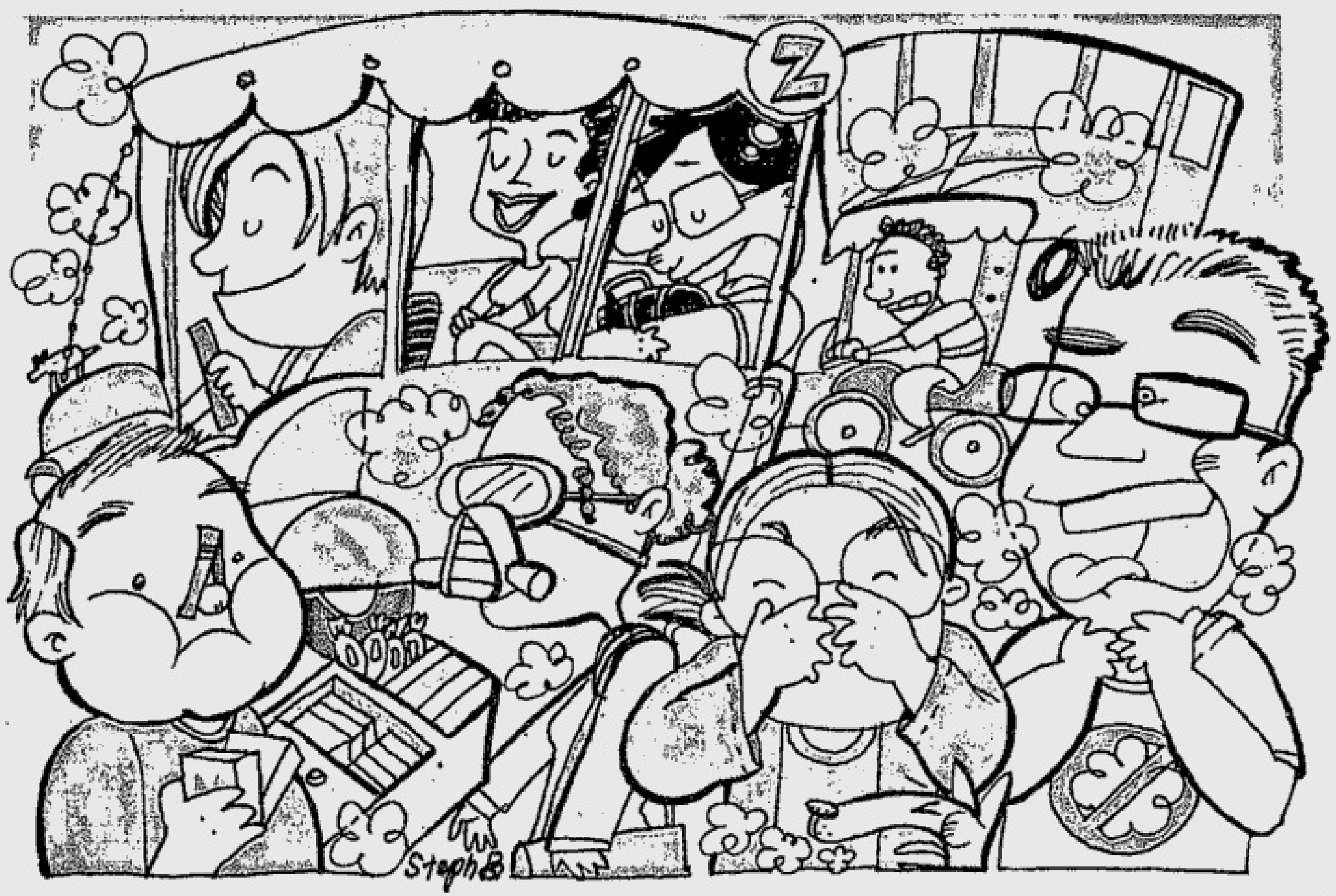


ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

But these major oil companies have recently announced that they will be able to meet the deadline, but still with the additional cost in their products.

The AIM paper also warned that since next year's provision will only affect gasoline, more resistance is expected by 2004 when another standard, this time for diesel fuel, will apply.

Majority of the transport vehicles in the country use diesel fuel.

Not yet configured

The AIM Policy Center noted that since the refineries of the three oil majors are not yet configured to produce compliant fuel by next year, they will have to import blending components from countries such as Thailand and Singapore.

A price adjustment of P0.80 to P1.20 price adjustment is expected in unleaded fuel while there will only be a small price adjustment with diesel, according to the AIM paper.

Unlike the bigger firms, the AIM paper cited that smaller players in the market will have no problem complying since they will only have to import finished products from countries producing fuel with compliant specifications such as China and Taiwan.

In fact, Unioil, assured there will be no price adjustment for their gasoline while diesel fuel would only increase by 15 to 30 centavos.

Deferring the provision

But even without these imminent price hike from oil firms, the energy department is already thinking about deferring the provisions amid pressure on oil prices from the higher cost of world crude due to anxiety over a possible war in Iraq.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez believes that since the fuel with the required specifications is not readily available in the market, they may actually be making the country's energy security more vulnerable.

He said there are only a few countries in the region, Thailand particularly or the US (in California), which currently produce this highly specific mix adding that his department was only concerned about the impact on transportation fares.

The Philippines imports all its crude oil requirements and sources its oil from 15 countries, of which only three are in the Middle East. The rest of the sources are in the Asia-Pacific region.

Not to be compromised

The AIM paper however warned that the deferment must not compromise the potential environmental and health benefits of having cleaner fuels and less toxic emissions.

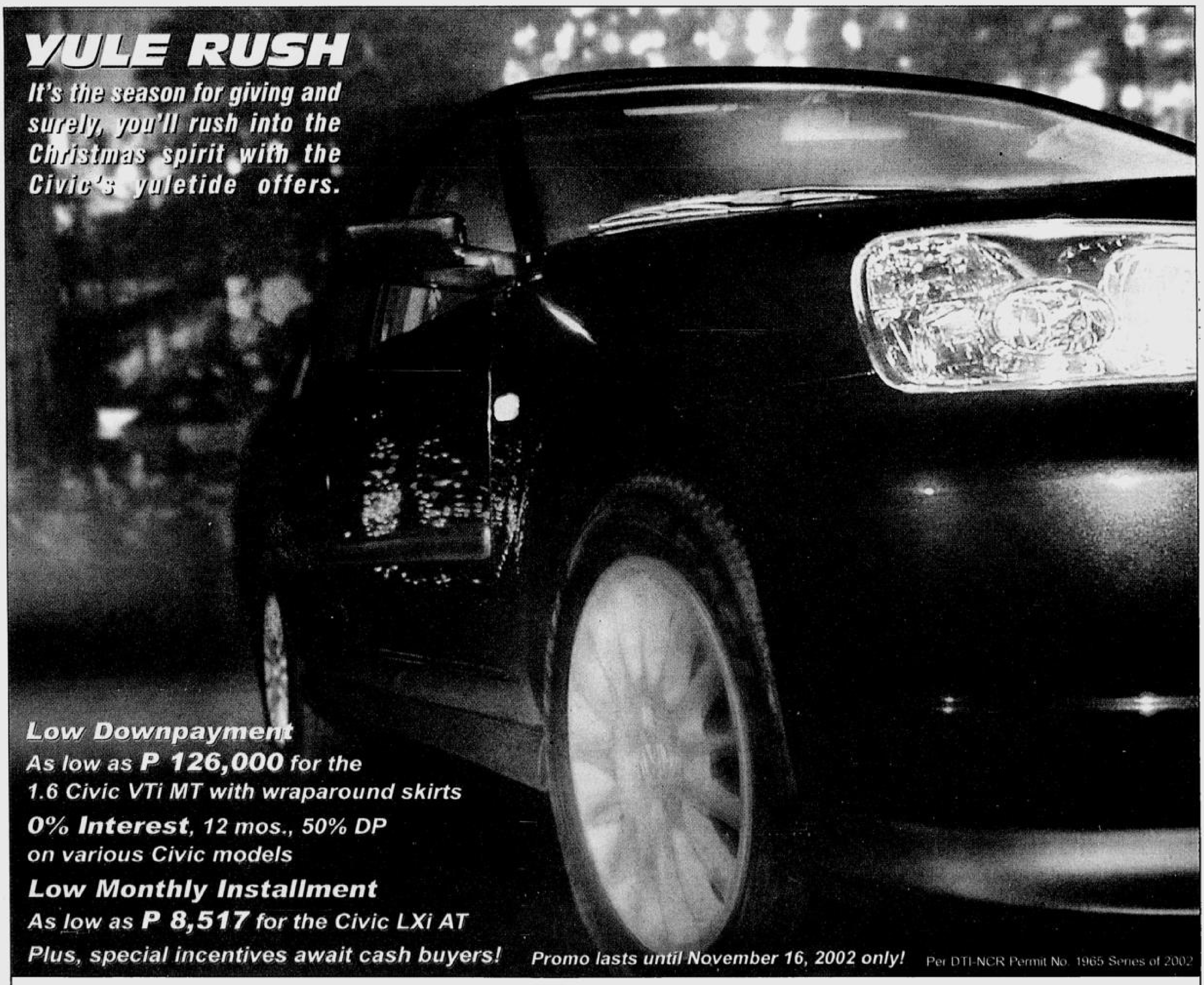
The aromatics, which the Act intends to curb, are additives used to raise the octane levels of fuel, but have been found to contain elements harmful to the ozone layer. Benzene, on the other hand, plays a role in causing cancer.

The passage of the Clean Air Act was in response to the public clamor for government action on the worsening air pollution in the Philippines caused by vehicular and industrial emissions and on the rising incidences of health problems.

The AIM paper cited a Department of Environment and Natural Resources Environmental Management Bureau report that air quality in Metro Manila was gauged as unhealthy prior to 2000, particularly in 1997.

Air quality was measured by the amount of total suspended particulates, or dangerously fine dust suspended in the air. This indicates that people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit outdoor exposure.

Given that 70 percent of the emissions in Metro Manila come from mobile sources while 30 percent are from industrial, the AIM paper noted that fuel quality control is the appropriate avenue to focus efforts at achieving cleaner air.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Honda Cars Kalookan, Inc. Tel. Nos : 366-5701 to 24 Fax: 361-8445
Honda Cars Pasig Tel. Nos.: 634-2730 to 34 Fax: 637-2982
Honda Cars Alabang Tel. Nos.: 807-7704; 807-7978, 809-4560 Fax: 809-5052
Honda Cars Shaw Tel. Nos.: 717-1881; 725-7476; 718-2040 Fax: 725-7673
Honda Cars Manila Tel. Nos.: 562-4548 to 52 Fax: 562-4548 loc. 130
Honda Cars Fairview Tel. Nos.: 935-2659; 935-2817 Fax: 935-2645
Honda Cars Marikina Tel. Nos : 998-1142; 998-0494 Fax: 998-1794
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HONDA

Formula car driving not all glitz and glamor

Text and photos by Tessa R. Salazar

THE CLOSEST this reporter got to F1 driving was at the winding Hills of Monte Carlo in Monaco, crossing over to Italy two years ago. It was a blast, except we didn't drive a Formula One car but the right-hand drive Alfa Romeo 147, which had just been launched then.

A couple of F1 invites later (which were passed up), it would be in the Philippines that this reporter would have her closest brush ever to formula car racing—and not just as a spectator at that, but as the driver herself.

Two weeks ago she participated in a "crash" course with the first Asian Formula 3 champion British Mark Goddard and a seven-lap drive, not of an Asian Formula car, but a Formula Toyota 1600.

AF3
Asian Formula 3 Corporation
JAMES Deakin of Autoextreme and C! Magazine raring to go.

Power

Don't be fooled by the "1600cc" thing. The engine was configured differently from your standard Corolla. The standard Corolla engine is 4AFE. Formula Corolla's is 4AGE, which is not really new since the latest is a VVTi. Still this Formula Toyota lugged 20 valves versus its FE counterpart's 16, which meant higher horsepower (160 brake horsepower), and a better powerband. In all departments the 4AGE outsprints the 4AFE. Well, it should, as the Formula Toyota is expected to run at least 200 kph in long stretches. It has 4 cylinders and 20 valves.

The one-seater Formula Toyota literally hugs the ground. As there's no door to speak of, this reporter literally had to leap into a narrow opening at the top. The whole contraption weighs 450 kilos—the reason for its racing friendly power-to-weight ratio and acceleration.

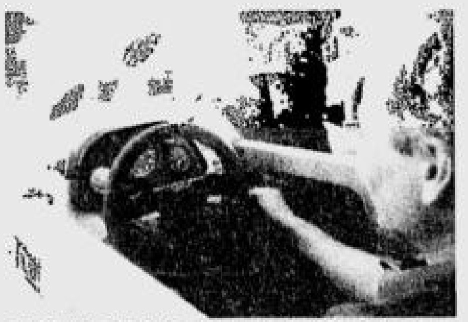
This Formula Toyota costs about P1 million. Sounds cheap, doesn't it? But if you think of it as a purely racing machine meant only for the racetrack, this would be a substantial investment.

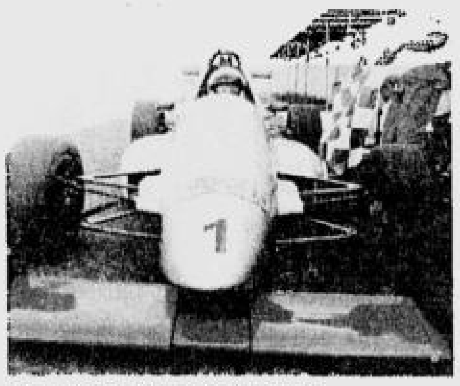
For a two-hour practice session with the Formula Toyota, an individual has to shell out between P40,000 and P80,000. This price includes the services of mechanics, spare parts replacements that include the tires and brake pads, and the fuel consumed. And we haven't even factored in the transport expenses from the garage to the racetracks.

Fast but fragile

Formula Toyota is fast, but it is also fragile. The Toyota Formula is called an open wheeler; its oversized tires are exposed. If you happen to damage the tires on the run, the risk of damaging their suspension parts is also high.

There's an art to stepping inside a Formula car. This writer was instructed to step as wide and as high as she could so her first leg reached the racing seat without hitting the sides of the car. Then she successfully skipped her other leg onto the driver's seat. Her two hands gripped the sides of the car as she swung in and slipped onto the seat, careful not to hit the side pads. Why? The side pads are sensitive. Even light contact of the wall hitting the side pads could damage the bodywork. Plus, its radiator is on the right side and the oil cooler is on the left. Thus, damaged bodywork would also cause essential fluids to leak. This is also the reason drivers are asked to be extra careful while making maneuvers. Fast but fragile, indeed.


THE FIRST AF3 champ, Goddard has competed in a lot of racing such as Formula 4 and AF2000.


THE (AMBITIOUS) WRITER

Silly getup

We were required to wear head covering (before the helmet) and a pair of soft driving shoes. After looking silly with the getup, this driver had to study "the art of getting into the Formula Car." You'd really get to admire the likes of big guys like Schumacher just by wondering how they got into these things.

You erase all notions of luxury when you drive these fast little devils. For this driver, the racing staff had to change the seat cushions several times, as the seats were too low. Even the dashboard was a miser (it had no speedometer, but had a huge RPM gauge), the steering wheel redefined "*pawis* steering." The slick tires looked like black balloons ready to burst.

Safety was adequate, though, as this driver was strapped into a six-point seatbelt. The "antisubmarine belt" or the crotch strap hadn't been used for this driver, though. Still, she felt secure in a four-point seatbelt with rotating locks. The straps were truly tight, and the helmet was heavy. Exposed to the midday sun, this driver was literally in the frying pan of the moment.

It was uncomfortable just standing still, waiting for the green light. But once the wheels screeched forward, there was no turning back. After two laps, this writer was getting the hang of it and sped like there was no tomorrow. The RPM indicator seemed to dare her to put it in the red (recommended limit was 4,500 rpm).

She got so involved in it she didn't notice she was flagged several times as she went beyond the five-lap limit. In the end, she did seven laps.

There were no cheers, no carrying on the shoulders or breaking open the champagne. Well, it was just practice, guys.

Ready, set, go

Some details were remembered after the heat of the moment. She remembered she used no keys. The push of a button started the engine. You revved it hard, and you felt your own adrenaline pumping. The four-speed gear didn't look like your regular stick shift or the Formula One gearshift (F1 gear lever has paddle shifter on the steering wheel, reaches six to seven speeds and has electronic driver aid), but more of a small plain metal stick. Handling that took some time, coupled with such hard clutches.

Oh, yes. You can shift the car to reverse. With some oomph, bring the gear with all your might to the extreme left and push it forward.

Before jumping to the racetrack. We had a glimpse of a Mark Goddard's "running lesson" on avoiding wall crashes.

First we were told to always keep the balance of the car. If one was to approach a right-hand corner, the approach would be from the far left hand side of the circuit and the first thing to do was to brake. Drivers use an exact "brake marker" as their braking point. Braking earlier would make go too slow, braking later would make it hard to avoid the wall.

By using your own brake point marker you can be consistent lap after lap. And that's easier said than done. Try being consistent for 500 laps, and you would reach a higher level of concentration. Some "fix" their braking marker on a road landmark, and they look for that every time they approach the corner.

The art of driving faster than the other driver is essentially dictated by the laws of physics. Too much power on the wheels will take the grip away from the tire. In everything, Goddard sums up, balance is the key to success.

This reporter wouldn't mind another round at the circuit to get the hang of that "balance" thingie.

Formula Toyota car is used as a series for the Philippines. Racers for this type are required to have a one-make class with identical engine, chassis and tires. It may still be far from the F3 but the way you drive it and the way you take your lines around corners are all the same. If you succeed in Formula. Toyota, there's no reason you shouldn't make it to F3.

THE NISSAN Sentra Exalta Superio

Nissan Exalta Superio, marathon car

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

THE DOORS on the left side of the car groaned when opened, the front cupholders were stuck, the rear seat had a big black stain, the beige upholstery and floor mats were gray with grime, the cartridge of the CD changer was missing and the engine looked as if it had been splattered with grease.

Is this any way to present a car to a motoring journalist for a five-day test drive? Yes, if the car is the 2002 Nissan Sentra Exalta Superio, the first automatic transmission car to break the Pan Philippine Marathon record previously set by the Nissan Sentra Series III in 1996.

From March 22 to April 22, this Nissan ran the 4th Pan Philippine Marathon course. It covered 30,661 kilometers of Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao through all kinds of road and weather, its engine running nonstop 24 hours a day for 30 days in the ultimate test of performance and endurance for a passenger sedan. Even when the car stopped every 200 km or so for a change of drivers or after longer distances to change the five-man crew on board, the engine was kept running.

1,000 km a day

The marathon Exalta Superio averaged around 1,000 kilometers a day with a full passenger load of five men, three sleeping in the back, each waiting for his turn at the wheel while the driver steered with the navigator by his side on the front seat.

When the marathon car, still bearing the stickers and logos of the 4th Pan Philippine Marathon sponsors, was delivered at my doorstep before the All Saints' Day holiday weekend, it arrived "as is" with 35,000 km recorded on the odometer. The car hadn't been cleaned and the engine had not been touched except for the routine oil change and replacement of spark plugs. The sump guard and gas tank guard, ¼-inch-thick metal plates, were still bolted underneath to protect the oil pan and gas tank, respectively. Only the rock guard, which protected the radiator and radiator fan from stones and pebbles during the Marathon, had been removed.

Rally tires

The tires were still the 14-inch Goodyear Ventura rally tires that had replaced the 185/65 R14 factory stock tires after the first 10,000 kilometers of the Marathon. Rally tires were installed as bad roads ahead were expected, such as in Palo, Leyte.

Raymond Tribdino, the new corporate communications manager of Nissan Motor Philippines Inc., told me that the Exalta Superio did not undergo special preparations for the Marathon except for the sump guard, tank guard, rock guard and rally tires. Only normal preventive maintenance processes were followed. From zero on the odometer at takeoff time, the brand-new Exalta had a general checkup and initial oil change after 5,000 kilometers, the mandatory spark plugs, air filter and oil filter replacements after 10,000 kms and another oil change and belt checkup after 15,000 km.

A duplicate Exalta ran the same marathon course as backup while an older model Sentra was brought in as a support vehicle in the critical stages of the Marathon. Aside from Palo, Leyte, the marathon car went to such places as Carigara, Cebu City, Bais, San Carlos City, Bacolod, Dumaguete, Iloilo City, Jaro, Roxas City, Davao City, Cagayan de Oro, Butuan, Surigao City, Malaybalay, Tacloban, Ormoc, Naga City, Cabanatuan, Tuguegarao, Laoag, Vigan, San Fernando (La Union), Dagupan, Capas and Mabalacat.

Still powerful

By the time the marathon car reached me, it was no longer in mint showroom condition but the 1.6-liter, 4 cylinder-in-line, twin cam, 16-valve engine was still powerful and cruising effortlessly at 120 km per hour on the expressway; its automatic transmission was still shifting smoothly; its 4-wheel disc brakes with ABS were very strong; the ride was comfy due to its still-intact suspension system; the fully automatic aircon system with sunload sensor was still working well; the driver's side airbag was still there and the rear backup sensor was still functioning, ditto the power door locks, windows, sideview mirrors and antenna.

In other words, the Exalta Superio did not only set a new Pan Philippine Marathon record, it endured the grueling 30-day challenge intact, without needing any repairs afterward. When the marathon car logs 100,000 km, it will undergo an engine check. The heads will be examined for wear and to see how microfinishing helped the engine to pass the marathon test with flying colors.

Tribdino explains that microfinishing is an expensive technology, previously used only for race cars, that Nissan pioneered in replicating on a commercial scale in 1995. It is a process, done by robots in Nissan's factory in Japan, whereby the engine cylinders and valve train are highly polished so as to make them almost friction-less.

Whatever the reason for the Exalta Superio's excellent performance, we can only conclude that this is a passenger car that is not only stylish, with luxe interior details and conveniences, it is also a hardy, tried-and-tested marathon runner.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: Don't squat with your spurs on.

RPN

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Catch AUTO EXTREME every Saturday, 4 PM on RPN 9 and log on to www.autoextreme.tv

Each week, a viewer's question related to cars and motoring gets answered on Auto Extreme. You can get a hard copy every Thursday in the Motoring section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

WHAT is the meaning of ESP? —*Rocks Navaja*

Imagine this, it's a rainy night and you're rushing to get home down a dark, deserted road when suddenly, some street children playing in the rain shoot across the road and you turn the wheel hard and hit the brakes to avoid them. It's moments like this that ESP kicks into action and saves lives.

ESP stands for Electronic Stability Program and is an innovative braking technology that intervenes within fractions of a second via the engine computer and brake system to stabilize the vehicle in case of any unstable driving condition—such as a sudden evasive move.

ESP unites the essential safety components of ABS (Anti-lock Brake System), EBD (Electronic Brake-force Distribution), EDL (Electronic Differential Lock), TCS (Traction Control System) and AYC (Active Yaw Control).

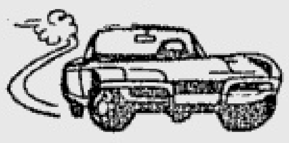
ESP continuously monitors measurement data from a number of sensors strategically placed throughout the vehicle. Then it analyzes this data to determine whether the actual course of the vehicle corresponds with the driver's commands. If it senses a difference, ESP jumps into action, making sure the vehicle retains its cornering and directional stability in all situations. Instability, oversteer and understeer are immediately registered and corrected.

If a critical condition occurs, ESP stabilizes the vehicle by actuating the brakes on individual wheels and adjusting the engine torque. Overall, ESP makes the car's handling performance safer all around–even in adverse weather conditions.

So you can say that the initials ESP can also mean clairvoyance because it's a safety feature that goes into action before an accident happens and actually prevents it.

Traffic-less fiesta

FULL TANK



Al Mendoza

THE THIRD of six "fiestas" in the Big City is over. By "fiesta," I mean the feast of celebrating a traffic-less day in the metropolis.

That was last All Saints' Day, Nov. 1, which also happens to be the birthday of three persons dear to me: Taby Tabaniag, who turned 83; Rene Adad, 74; and, Wally "*Insan*" Estrada, 52.

I have personally greeted Taby on Tuesday over lunch at Caffe Appassionato on Nicanor Garcia Street in Makati. I hope to see Wally tonight for his birthday bash at Timog's Tubbataha. I haven't greeted Rene yet; he is at present in Switzerland attending a football conference or something. Rene is the country's soccer czar, he with the novel Coke Go-for-Goal program that envisions to produce world-class Filipino football players.

* * *

All Saints' Day affords many city dwellers left behind by province-bound *kabaleyans* to savor a metropolis free from traffic hassles.

The streets are almost empty of vehicles. Travel time by car is cut to more than half; by bus, almost half.

I have always believed that Metro Manila is not that big. It has a big population (now 13 million I guess compared to Singapore's 4 million); but, its land area isn't that big. Traffic makes it big, thus the lots of hours—and fuel, and money—wasted on the road during travel time.

* * *

The Big City is overpopulated, no doubt about that. By simple logic, since there's not much traffic during big holidays, a congested Manila is one major cause of traffic.

A lot of talk has been spent on ways of decongesting—deurbanizing even—the Big City. Squatters must have to be relocated, if not sent back to their roots. Companies, schools and hospitals restructured in the provinces. And even government offices transferred outside the city limits, preferably kilometers away like, say, Pampanga or Cavite or Laguna.

In Malaysia, a spot earmarked outside Kuala Lumpur will sprout the country's government offices. Because it's quite far from the Big City, traffic will soon virtually disappear from the metropolis. The project has been started and will need 10 years to complete.

* * *

Over here, all talk of decongesting, deurbanizing, the Big City remains just that: all talk. Reason: Politicians are too afraid to touch the squatters—their main source of votes. Another reason is, government officials are too busy doing something else. I saw a sticker once plastered at the rear of a vehicle: Don't Steal/Government Hates Competition.

Get the drift?

By the way, the other five traffic-less "fiestas" of the year are New Year's Day, Good Friday, Labor Day (May 1), Christmas Day, Rizal Day (Dec. 30) and Dec. 31.

* * *

Volvo will launch the "Viking Feast" at the posh Tower Club of Philamlife in Makati on Nov. 11. The occasion features the presentation of the new Volvo S40 T4 to mark the eighth year of Volvo's presence in the country. To *compañero* Alberto B. Arcilla, my gratitude: If I feel like wearing The Beatles tie given as a *pasalubong* from New York by Vernon Sarne, maybe I'll be there. Tower Club is strictly coat and tie and I'm a stickler for rules.

* * *

Toyota repeats history this weekend when it launches the new Revo in Cebu City.

Some years back, the giant car company stunned the motoring world when it unwrapped its new Corolla in Hong Kong, with no less than Gary Valenciano performing atop a hill in a cool, moonlit night overlooking the bay of the Crown Colony. To those present during the occasion, that was worth remembering, if only for the program's utter originality.

Not content with that, Toyota next unveiled its Revo—at the Mactan Shangri-La in Cebu. To Danny Isla, Raymond Rodriguez, Ariel de Jesus and Charlon Alcala, here's a glass to your unwavering efforts in bringing to your clientele (and that include the motoring journalists) only the best.

If only I could come. Boy, I'd surely miss your red wine, guys.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Buying a new car? The time is now when Christmas perks are just around the corner.

World-class bike trainer opens school in Philippines

By Charles E. Buban

DIRECTOR Steve Broggy of the California/Australian Suberbike School will also join the pool of instructors led by Keith Code in the inaugural class next week

IF YOU think you already know enough about riding a motorcycle, chances are you might still have a thing or two to learn.

Whether you drive a Ducati, Honda, Aprilla, Motto Guzzi, Yamaha, Kawasaki, a Harley Davidson or even a scooter, you will surely learn some more at the California/Australian Superbike School (Philippines). The school will hold its inaugural class from Nov. 16 to 17 at the Subic International Raceway.

No less than Keith Code, the world-class trainer of Superbike champs like Wayne Rainey, Doug Chandler, Scott Russell, John Kocinski and Bubba Shobert, was invited to lead the two-day inaugural training.

MANILABIKES.COM'S Chan (right) joins Tony Tanda of Aprilia, Europe's second largest manufacturer of motorcycles and scooters and one of the major sponsors during the school's launch.

Code is the leading bike instructor who developed the art of cornering and has trained more riders (over 100,000 worldwide) as well as more champions (dozens of them) over the past 20 years than anyone else in the world.

More confidence

"The California/Australian Superbike school promises to give participants more confidence and enjoyment from riding their motorcycles and learning the basic cornering tools and techniques, things like what it takes to make it right, what can go wrong and how to fix it," assured Michael Chan, director of Manilabikes.com, the company responsible for bringing the superbike school in the country.

Manilabikes.com aims to provide the participants with the necessary skills to ride and enjoy their motorcycles the way they were designed to be ridden.

"We teach the students to find their limits and their machine's limits so that if and when the time comes they will know exactly how to react and there's no better place to do it than in the racetrack," said Chan.

System based

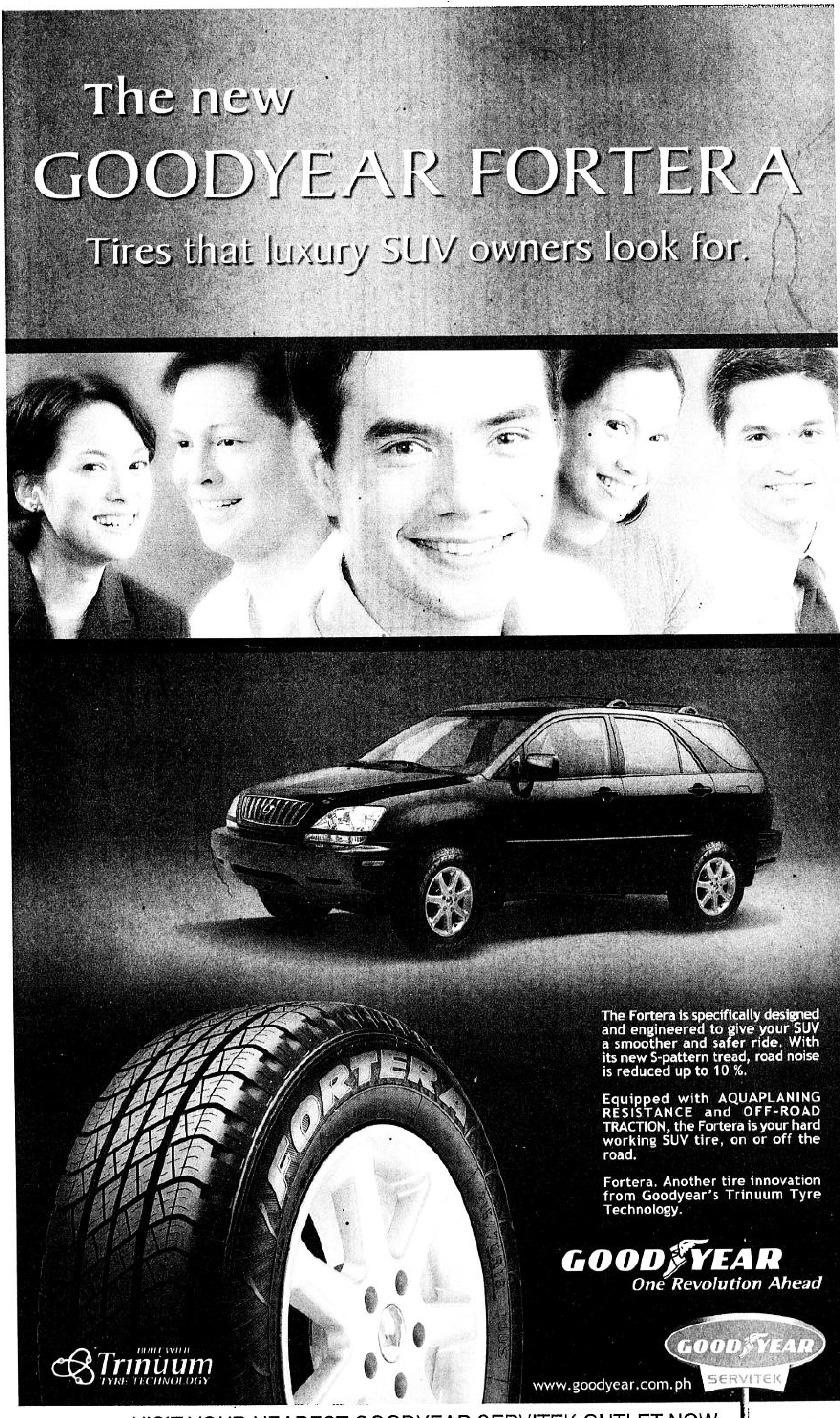
The California/Australian Superbike school uses a system based on levels 1, 2, 3 and 4.

"The inaugural class will tackle Levels 1 and 2, with everyone starting at Level 1 to master 90 percent of any rider's confidence problem before moving on to level 2. The Level 2 teaches students to integrate visual and mental skills with the exercise learned at the first level," explained Migs Ripoll, the marketing manager of the California/Australian Superbike school.

Launched on Oct. 16 at the Eastwood City, the California/Australian Superbike school treated some 500 bike lovers to a display of a variety of bikes.

The event was supported by Shell Advance, Oakley, Axe-Unilever, PLDT, Bridgestone, Suomy, AGV, Access Plus, Dreambikes, Aprilla and Ultrabikes.

For those who missed the event, a stunning display of motorcycles from off-road to standard, sports, cruiser and scooter as well as accessories and supplies will be held at The Wonderful World of Bikes presentation on Nov. 8-9 at the Central Plaza of the Eastwood City Walk.



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ASPIRING FOR ACCREDITATION Manila Windshield Repair Co. is aspiring to be one of the newest private emission testing centers (PETCs) in line with Republic Act 8749 or the Clean Air Act of 1999. When accredited, this pioneering Filipino firm engaged in windshield long crack repair is authorized to conduct emission testing for purposes of vehicle registration with the Land Transportation Office. Still for inspection by the DTI/DOTC team, the firm utilizes the Prodia brand.

Luxury car show opens in Alabang

THE AUTO exhibit industry faces a new horizon as the country's first ever luxury car show opens its doors on Nov. 8 at the Alabang Town Center activity area.

Dubbed as the Luxury MotorShow 2002 Manila, it promises to usher in a gamut of luxury and sports vehicles, car care and car accessories under one venue.

Being the country's first exhibit of such character, the event brings in renowned brands such as Mercedes-Benz, Porsche, Ferrari, BMW, Audi, GM and Isuzu.

Awards and prizes will be given to several categories of the participating exhibitors such as Best Luxury Car Display, Best Luxury Sports Car Display (latest model category), Best Area Presentation—Nonvehicle Category, Best Luxury Sports Car Display and the much-coveted Best Overall Display.

With a lineup as formidable as this, it was a challenge for organizer—Imelda de Maiztegui—to put up a car display with such granduer.

"It was no easy feat to do such an exhibit where we can now see some of the world's renowned brands together," claims De Maiztegui. "But the challenge was enough to drive me and my team into going on with this seemingly impossible project."

A veteran at organizing trade shows and car exhibits, De Maiztegui spearheads 33rd Street Productions which has been in the industry of events and trade show organizing. De Maiztegui claims that this endeavor hopes to bring car exhibits and exhibitors alike up another notch. However, it was not an easy task since it will be the first that a tradeshow of this magnitude has been conceived.

"We are envisioning this as the proponent of such grand scale events and we are hoping to get in more participants every year," said De Maiztegui.

Being a first in the country, this paves a new direction in the automotive industry. Definitely not a rookie in the industry, De Maiztegui realizes the potential of such exhibits—from its choice of participants to the sponsors up to the concepts—which makes such events a truly remarkable one.

The Luxury Motor Show 2002 Manila is presented by Michelin and Petron Blaze. It is sponsored by Inforcom, San Mig, Auto Review, Auto Extreme, HSBC, The Philippine Star, C!, Joey 92.3, CityLite 88.3, Trans World, 105.1 Crossover and Autoindustriya.com.

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The family that cooks together stays together

By Eufemia C. Estrada
Contributor

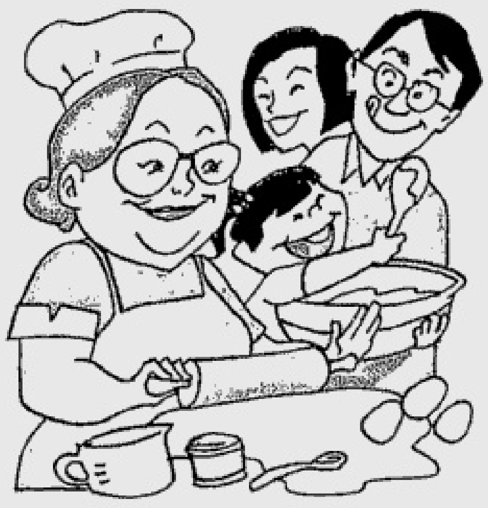


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

ONE OF my fondest childhood memories is of *puto*-making during the Japanese occupation, when food was scarce.

My mother would soak the rice and grind it in my Tia Pacita's stone grinder, with us kids vying for the task of feeding the rice by hand into the grinder. The boys would do the heavier task of turning the heavy grinder round and round as the ground rice would drain down into a container.

Then, the ground rice, thick with the water with which it was ground, would be mixed with the dough starter, the *lavadura*, and left to ferment overnight, after which it would be steamed the following morning in time for breakfast.

Those were great *puto* days! My cousin Fidel remembers those days, too, and swears by the *puto* his mother made. We lived in a compound, you see, and our mothers shared recipes.

No *puto* he has eaten since, he says, is as good as the *puto* of his childhood memories.

And the tragedy is, none of us in the next generation, now in our 60s and 70s, really learned the skill. We never observed how long the rice had to be soaked, how thick the mixture should be, how to prepare the dough starter, the *lavadura* (no baking powder or yeast for our mothers' *puto*), how long the steaming took.

In fact, I remember the ground rice in a bag of muslin (*katsa*) tied to a roof beam and left to drain overnight. I don't know where this step came in or if it was for another *kakanin*.

When Fidel's favorite and only daughter Dimpy decided their generation would not commit the same mistake, the family cooking lessons of treasured recipes were begun. "Before you, guys, go," she said.

Masters

The lessons are held in my cousin Med's house in Alabang or at Dimpy's place in San Lorenzo. No fixed schedule, just whenever the schedules of both generations allow. The young usually pick the recipes; the older generation recalls what ingredients are needed.

The master cooks are my cousin Med and I, both senior citizens. The second generation of cousins consists of Benz, Marge, Dimpy and newly married in-law Jenny. The third generation has Dimpy's youngest daughter, six-year-old Marga, who would rather forego watching the stage presentation of "Snow White" with her cousins to attend a cooking lesson. Whenever his health permits, my cousin Fidel kibitzes. It was he who showed us how we could use a big fork to hold the recipe card while cooking/baking.

We have had guest demonstrators like Ellen, the family cook of long ago, who came to show how she made the *suman sa lihiya* that she used to make for Todos los Santos. She, in turn, learned this from her mother in Naic, Cavite.

When Dimpy was able to source the *bidbid* we needed for the family recipe of *kekiam*, we had this lesson together with the *suman sa lihiya*, both of which were labor-intensive. Talk about combinations!

Bidbid is similar to *bangus*, but narrower and limp. Its flesh—sticky, with soft spines, is highly prized, especially among the Chinese for their *bola-bola*. They have probably cornered the market as the fish has disappeared from the stalls in Farmers.

In the past, I could get *bidbid* there, sometimes big ones, as big as a person's arm, which could be made into *paksiw*, with its fat oozing into the vinegar base. Anyway, on the day of the *kekiam* lesson, Dimpy was ready with the skinned and deboned *bidbid*, the diced shrimp and pork fat, and the *unto sin sal*.

Although the *unto sin sal* could do with more washing and rinsing, the *kekiam* was great.

Recently, Marga, the youngest in the group, requested we make gingerbread boys and girls. She was in a tizzy over the mini versions and had a great time decorating the 2-inch cookies, but her Mom decreed it would be the first and the last there would be of such an undertaking.

So, to compromise on Marga's next request for a gingerbread house, I said we would bake a butter cake in a house mold, and the fun would come in decorating it with candy, limited only by one's imagination.

When the group requested *ensaymada* lessons, Dimpy, bursting with energy, wanted to try out not one but all three family recipes of the delicacy. We were under time constraint and patience (as in waiting for the dough to rinse properly), not being one of Dimpy's virtues. The end result was not exactly light air, but it was delicious just the same.

When the second-generation cousins have not seen each other for some time, no one seems to be listening; each one is busy bonding, getting the latest family gossip, but it's a lot of fun, and when we try the recipe on our own, we are careful to do things properly.

With everyone yakking away, it's inevitable that there are slips and errors. One time, it was our gingerbread dough that didn't come out right. It was too dry and crumby, and impossible to roll out. We couldn't figure out what had gone wrong. A review of the recipe showed we missed the addition of boiling water to the dough. Blame it on failing eyesight!

Making do

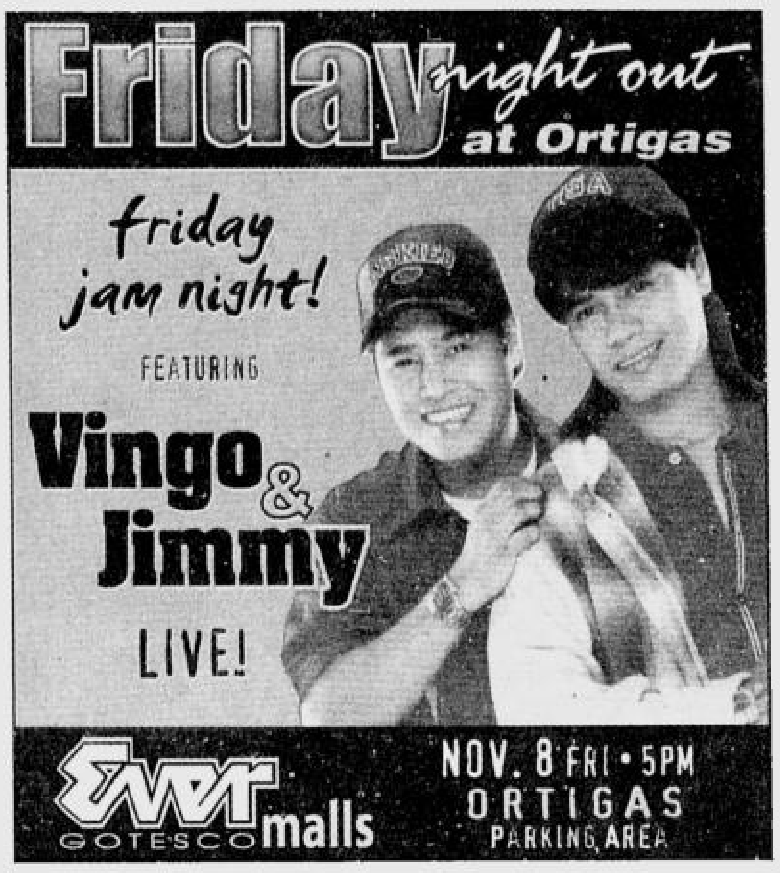
Sometimes, of course, it happens that we miss out on an ingredient and have to make do with what is in the pantry. One time, for our Brazo de Mercedes, we had only an ancient can of condensed milk available. It was no longer creamy white but caramel brown, and even Fidel, a surgeon, who said the sugar would keep it from spoiling, had to declare it unfit for human consumption.

Now Dimpy, who has a large family—four kids ranging from ages 6 to 19, the "bottomless-stomach" years, is not one to cook small batches. It is always of major proportions.

So if it's *suman sa lihiya*, it is not just 1 or 2 kg of *malagkit*, but 4 to 6 kg and several bunches of banana leaves. After all, all participating families must have its take-home share. When I get tired from all the action, I simply take a breather and come out when it's time for apportioning.

Between the good food and lively conversation, everybody enjoys the good time. Knock on wood: so far we have not forgotten the cake baking in the oven or the dough rising in the *ensaymada* while we are having lunch.

Sorry, guys, no recipes this time. As it says on one of our aprons, "Don't ask me for the secret family recipe."



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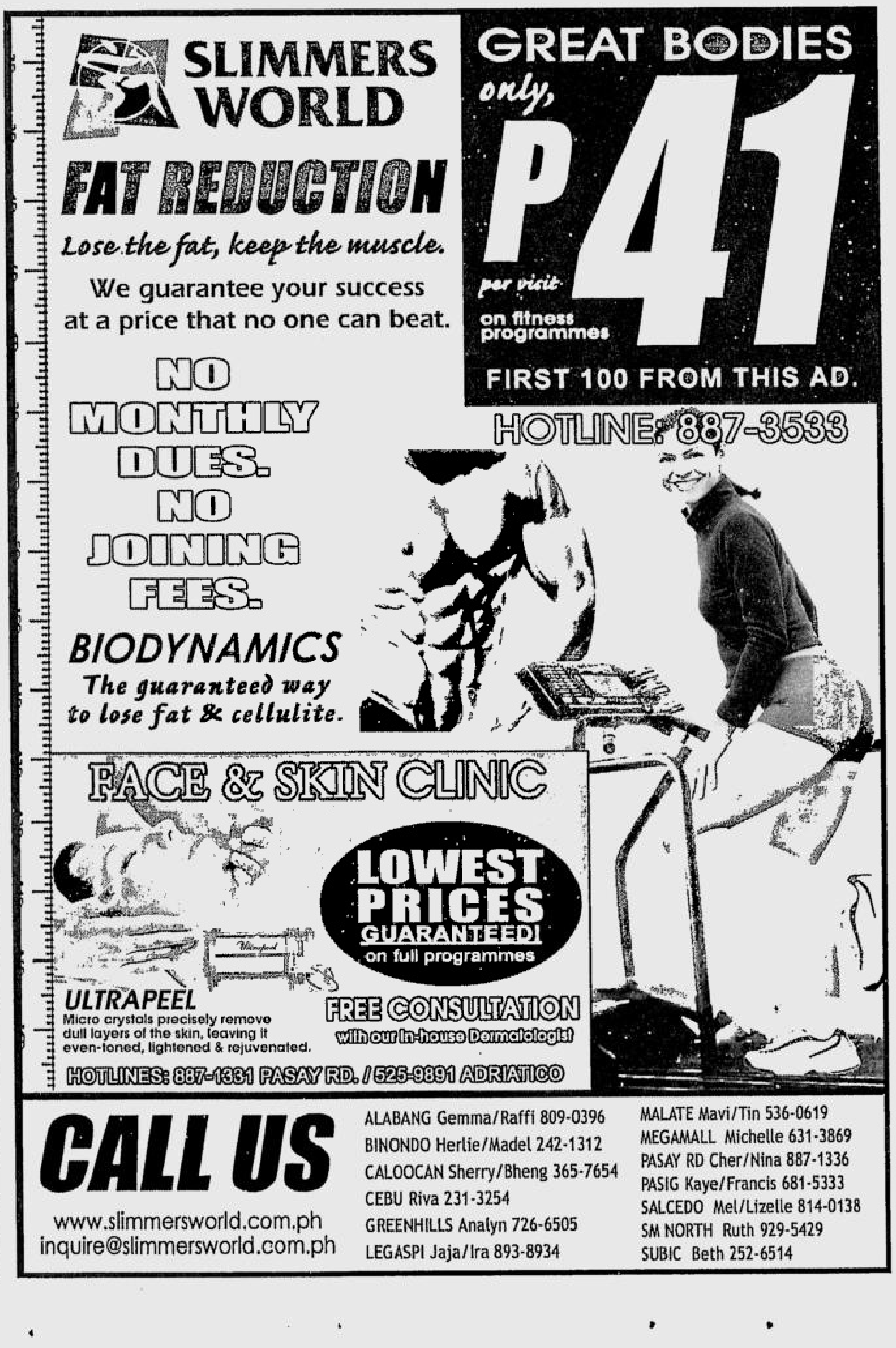

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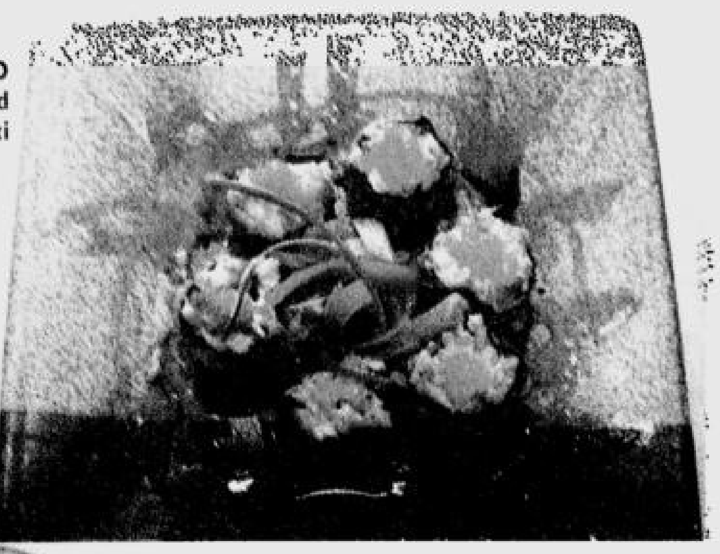
The Maya Kitchen CULINARY ARTS CENTER
PASTILLAS, FRUITCAKES AND MORE
The jolly Yuletide season is fast approaching and what better way to welcome it than to make the most out of it. Attend the Maya Kitchen courses and turn your skills into a business advantage. Learn how to make and market Pastillas, Fruitcakes, Ham and more. These are great gifts and give aways during this time of sharing. And because it is also a time for parties, start a home catering business by enrolling in the Christmas Party Pack Meals' classes. Check out the schedules below.
ONE-DAY SPECIALS: (Enrollment is on a first come, first served basis)
Pastillas Atbp.: Nov. 9 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Pastillas de Leche, Ube-Macapuno, Mani, Langka; Pulvoron and Yema including costing and packaging. P700
7-day Curing Ham: Nov. 9 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Chicken Ham, Pata Hamon, Pork Ham. Bonus: Canadian Bacon & Pastrami. P700
Cookies & Bars: Nov. 9 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Food for the Gods, No Roll Sugar Cookies, Festive Refrigerator Cookies, Lemon Bars, Danish Butter Cookies, Crinkles. Bonus: Almond Rocca. P700
Party Pack Menu I: Nov. 16 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Shrimp Mousse in Sugar can Sticks; Chicken in Red Curry Sauce; Baby Pork Spareribs; Mongolian Korean BBQ Squids; Coconut Pineapple Rice by Chef Sita Ram. P800
Fruitcakes & More: Nov. 16 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Golden Fruitcake, Light & Dark Fruitcake, Royal Fruitcake. Bonus: German Stollen & Italian Pannetone. P700
Pasta Class: Nov. 16 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Lasagna, Chicken Canneloni; assorted pasta dishes and sauces (Garlic Fettucini, Carbonara, Putanesca, Pesto and Negra). Bonus: homemade pasta making P750
Party Pack Menu 2: Nov. 23 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Vegetable Samosa; Charcoal Grilled Prawns with Special Sauce; Mongolian Korean Style Boneless Chicken BBQ; Indonesian Beef Stew; Nasi Goreng; Saffron Sticky Rice by Chef Sita Ram. P800
Kakanin: Nov. 23 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. Putong Puti, Sapin Sapin, Cassava Bibingka, Cuchinta, Pichi-Pichi, Maja Blanca. Bonus: Salabat & Maya Bibingka. P700
Baking with Institutional Mixes: Nov. 23 (Sat) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Assorted Brownies (Black Forest, Apple Chunk, Rocky Road), Pineapple Carrot Cake, Choco Banana Loaf, Chocolate Muffins with Fudge Frosting, Hotdog on Stick, Butterscotch Squares and Chocolate Crinkles. Bonus: Chocolate Rhumballs. P500
CERTIFICATE COURSES WITH HANDS-ON (Pre-registration required)
Basic & Advanced Cake Decorating: Nov. 9, 16 & 23 (Sat) 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Basic frostings, borderings, jelly letter, simple flowers, fondant & motif. Free decorating tips. P2,500
Cooking I (Basic) For Messmen, Stewards and Beginners: Nov. 12-15 or 26-29 (T-F) 1:30 - 5:00 p.m. Basic food preparation, cooking methods for vegetables, pasta, meats and poultry dishes; Techniques of deboning chicken and fish; Basic garnishing; Table setting and napkin folding; Actual preparation of popular Filipino and Oriental dishes. P2,200
Cooking II (Comprehensive Cooking) For Career Cooks: Nov. 20-22 or Dec. 4-6 (W-F) 9:00 a.m. - 1 p.m. Coverage: menu planning, standard techniques of preparing stocks, soups, sauces, dressings, salads, main dishes, homemade cold cuts, etc. applicable to 1001 recipes including plate and platter presentation. Free lunch. P2,500
Baking I (Basic): Nov. 20-22 or Dec. 4-6 (W-F) 1:30 - 5 p.m. Techniques in preparing basic pie crust, different types of cakes, quick bread, yeast breads and more. P2,000
EVENING SESSIONS: 5:30 - 9 p.m. (Pre-registration required)
Catering: Nov. 21-22 (Thu-Fri) Portion Control, Costing, Inventory, Table Layout & Equipment Sourcing with actual preparation of popular catering dishes: Morcon, Galantina, Pork Asado, Soy Chicken, Roast Pork, Baked Macaroni, All Meat Paella and special dessert. P1,500
Bakery & Bakeshop: Nov. 21-22 (Thu-Fri) Commercial methods used in preparing breads, pies and cakes including costing, production batching with actual hands-on. P1,500
Japanese Cooking: Nov.22 (Fri) Miso Soup, Mixed Tempura, Sukiyaki, Kamameshi; assorted Sushi; Kappamaki, Tekamaki, California Maki and Nigiri. P800
For inquiries and reservations
visit the Maya Kitchen (Tuesdays - Saturdays) at 8th floor, Liberty Building, A. Arnaiz Ave. (Pasay Road), Makati City or call tel. 892-1185 or 892-5011 loc. 108; or e-mail us at mayakitchen@pacific.net.ph

‘Surf ’n’ turf’ with style

From the culinary mavericks of Kulinarya Kitchen come another restaurant with more affordable treats, and the same fabulous flavors

Text by Alya B. Honasan
Photos by Val Handumon



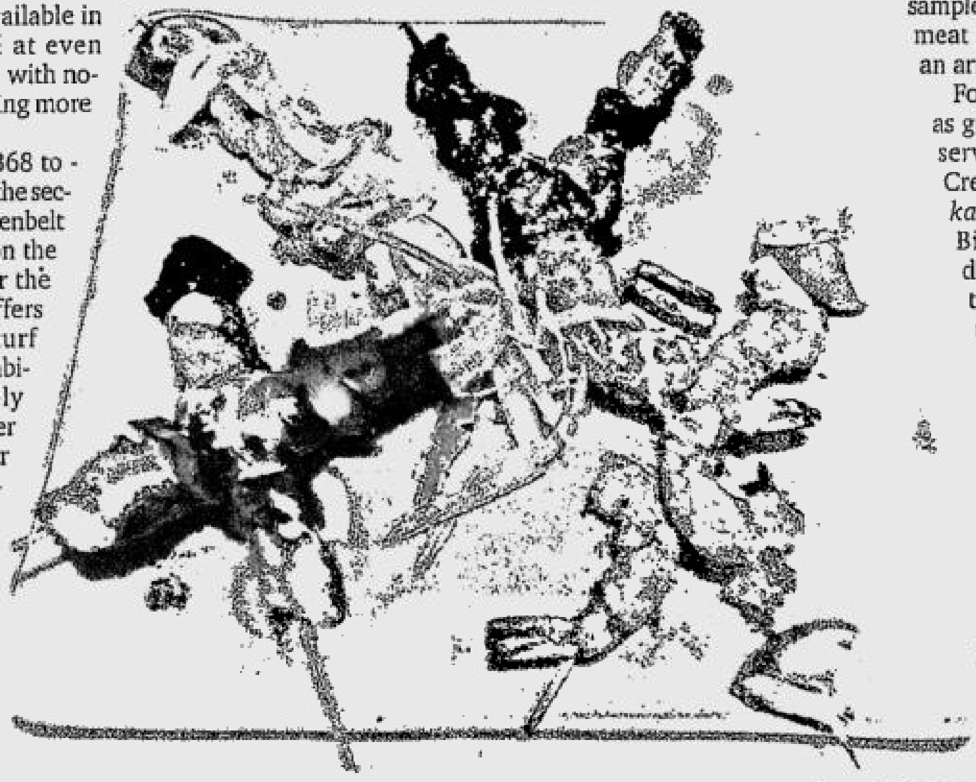
DEEP-FRIED Seafood Salad Maki

CHOCOLATE fondue with cheesecake, fruit and brownies

NOWADAYS, Chef Patricia “Pat” Mesina can breathe easier, literally. When she and fellow chef Francis Saldaña opened Kulinarya Kitchen in suburban Quezon City in 1999, the kitchen was the size of a shoebox.

“Now we’re much more comfortable,” says this amiable wife (to resto co-manager and businessman Carlo), mom (to 8-year-old Joshua, with another one on the way) and alumna of Gene Gonzalez and Jil Sandique’s Gallery of Culinary Arts. And, might we add, more successful. Kulinarya has since moved to Rockwell (to the chagrin of loyal Quezon City clients). There’s a new place, however, where the same of what Pat calls “comfort food with a twist” is available in new variations—and at even more affordable prices, with nothing on the menu costing more that P400.

Cascada (tel. 757-4368 to -69) opened Sept. 14 on the second floor of the new Greenbelt 3, sitting comfortably on the casual dining row near the movie theaters, and offers the popular surf ’n’ turf (seafood and meat) combinations with infinitely more style. Named after the Spanish word for “waterfall” and promising “the bounties of the land and harvest from the sea,” Cascada is a good option for yuppie lunchers, while still looking sleek enough for an evening date.



SKEWER sampler with beef, chicken, prawns and vegetables

Sea bounty

“The cuisine is lighter than Kulinarya, mainly because people here seem to be more health conscious,” Mesina says. Also, Cascada’s menu makes the most of local ingredients, while liberally using some of the dressings, vinaigrettes, sauces and consistently fresh ingredients that made the first restaurant a smash. So, for fans of Kulinarya’s Gambheri Pasta topped with spicy shrimps, Cascada throws in more sea bounty with the Seafood Gambas Pasta; the best-selling soups are available in new flavors and as an ingenious sampler of three Soup Shots; and the meat favorites are reincarnated as an array of juicy grilled skewers.

For starters, the Soup Shots look as good as they taste, with small servings of Trio of Mushrooms, Cream of Water Spinach (a.k.a. *kangkong*) and Baby Lobster Bisque available for a creamy degustation. Flavors and textures compete and titillate in the Gravlax and Cream Cheese Fritters Salad with Wasabi Dressing and Dill-Mustard Vinaigrette; imagine the cold fish wrapped around the crunchy bread-crumb coat of the warm, soft cheese.

If Kulinarya has its Spring Rolls with Oriental zing or its Crab and Mango Salad, you’ll love the Deep Fried Seafood Salad Maki, shrimp and crabstick salad rolled in nori, breaded and then deep-fried, then topped with ebiko, wasabi vinaigrette, soy balsamic reduction and mango coulis. Again, the unexpected crunch is a treat.

Sampler skewers

The skewers come in tasty Hoisin-Marinated Beef, Chicken Tikka, Tuna Satay, Chicken Yakitoru, Prawns, Vegetables, or Lamb. A sampler of seven sticks gives you two sticks of any meat, plus a vegetable skewer. We recommend the tasty tuna, seared just right and sashimi-tender on the inside.

There are bowls of filling rice in ingenious mixes (*tinapa* and orange, *aligue*, parsley and butter) for the carbo-loader. And as a concluding treat, four people can share the wonderfully inexpensive fondue of bittersweet chocolate, in which you can dip bite-sized bits of cheesecake, cream puff, brownies or fruit.

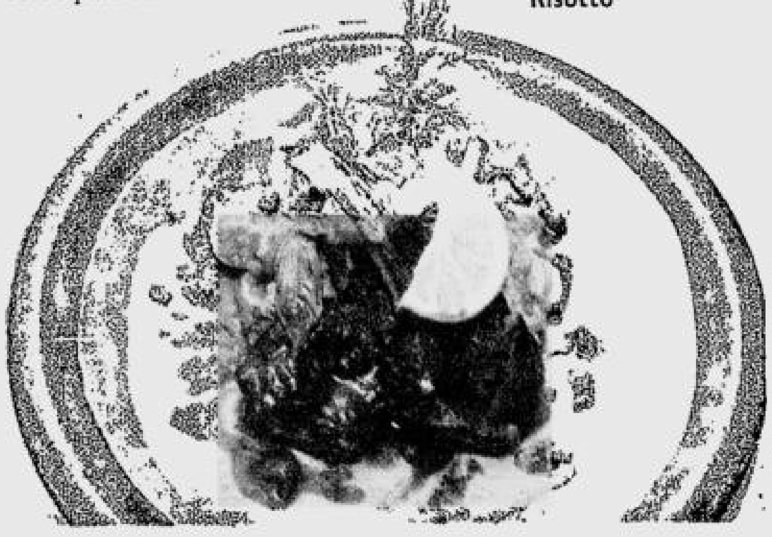
The pretty waterfall at the entrance, the custom-ordered Lanelle Abueva serving plates, and the air-friendly ionizer for the non-smoking section are just added considerations. But trust us: You’re going to come to Cascada for the food. It’s a lot like coming home.

Cascada is open daily 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and 5:30-9:30 p.m. on weekdays, and up to 10:30 p.m. on weekends.

TINAPA and Orange Rice

CHEF Pat Mesina

CASCADA’S interiors



LAMB Chops and Seafood Paella Risotto

Hassles of buying a new car

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

WE are not surprised that a big number of the complaints we receive from consumers are about car purchases and repairs. There’s just no specific government agency that addresses the concerns of private car owners. As we found out, you have to go to several agencies, that is if you can find the right ones, to seek redress for your grievances.

We called the Department of Transportation and Communications for the complaint of someone who got a raw deal while buying a car. The DOTC operator said we should call the Land Transportation Franchising Regulatory Board. When we called the LTFRB, we were advised to call the Department of Trade and Industry. The LTFRB was the wrong agency, they said. They were only concerned with issuance of certificates of public convenience, you know, jeepneys, taxis, buses, trucks for hire, shuttle services, etc. They only entertained complaints about taxis, buses, shuttles, etc.

We gave up tracking down the right agency when we were told to call the DTI consumer net for assistance. Here are the complaints from private vehicle owners who don’t know where to go for help:

Dr. A.D. Panlilio of tedd@ibahn.net decided to buy a Ford Escape from a car dealer in town. He paid the advanced deposit on July 30. He asked for the color silver and agreed to have it tinted for an extra P4,700 when the car dealer informed him later that the car had arrived Sept. 30 and would be delivered on Oct. 2. He was further advised about the requirements for financing arrangements, one of which was to get a car insurance from the car dealer company.

Panlilio bid for time so he could think things over. “I decided to pay cash for the car when I realized there were just too many financing requirements,” he said. “Then, I also found out that the dealer’s proposed insurance premium was initially P45,000. Why, I could get it elsewhere for P30,000! However, when I said I wished to pay in cash, the dealer said I could only get the car under a financing arrangement.”

The physician demanded to talk directly to the company sales manager and found out that “there was no such management policy [to force buyers to get car financing and insurance].” He was told by the manager that “our business was just to sell cars not get into financing or selling insurance.” Moreover, the delivery could not have been made on the date specified by the car dealer because the car units were not expected to arrive until much later.

“The car dealer almost made a fool out of me,” Panlilio wrote. He finally bought a car from Toyota Otis. “The salespersons, Ms Cruz and Ms Co, were very helpful and honest. They did not even mention financing options and in-house insurance when I told them I would pay in cash. And the car was delivered on time.”

A lemon car

H. Ong of harry12675@yahoo.com bought a late model car last year from a dealer on UN Avenue, Manila. Eight months later, the engine of the brand-new car started to have several episodes of stalling. These are all recorded by the company service center.

According to Ong, due to the recurrence of engine stalling, he experienced the following:

- Engine would shut down while he was driving;
- Hassles with the brakes every time the engine stalled while he parked at a basement car parking lot;
- Inconvenience of bringing the car to the service center;
- Loss of peace of mind because the engine would stall in the middle of the road;
- Worry about potential risks and dangers.

Ong said: “As a consumer, I really felt cheated. I have invested a relatively large sum of money in buying the car. Why does a big company with so much business in the Philippines sell such a defective car?”

Same lemon car

M.M. Hermosisima of dhermo@skyinet.net wrote: “Just like M. I. Vasallo Jr., the consumer who complained to your column about the car he bought, I have the same complaint. A month after we bought the car (August 2000), it started producing the irritating rattle on the front wheels. It has been in and out of the shop since then.

“We are lucky that the dealer here in Cebu attended to our complaint. The problem still recurs, however. And to think that the car company’s promo manual says, “If the dealer cannot solve the problem, the (car buyer) is to contact the (car company).”

Deceived by car ad

Manuel Ruiz of muruiz@yahoo.com bought a brand-new 4 X 23.0 diesel vehicle with automatic transmission from a car dealer in Pasig in May. He said he bought the car on the strength of the modern engine and other features specified in the sales brochures. The highest selling point was “its average fuel consumption of 19 km to 1 liter,” making it the “most economical” sports utility vehicle in the market today. It didn’t take long for Ruiz to notice the contrary.

He complained:

- The vehicle’s average daily fuel consumption was between 6 km/liter (city driving) and 9 km/liter (highway), which is less than half of what the brochure advertised.
- It emitted black smoke. The brochure hyped that the vehicle had cleaner exhaust. It should emit 60 percent less particulate matter than other diesel engines, according to the car company claim.
- Left front window channel is loose. As of this writing, the dealer has yet to replace the part.

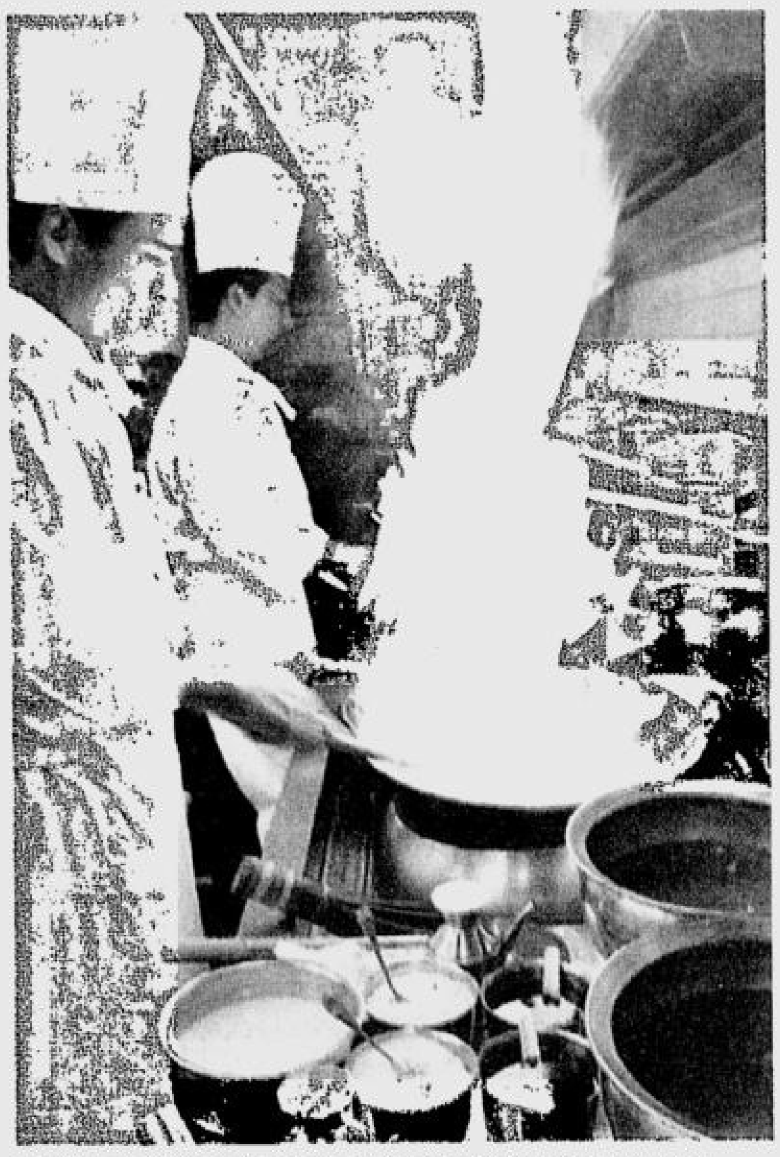
E-mail the author at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

HK restaurant's gourmet cuisine featured in Makati hotel

THE GRAND cuisine of Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong's stylish Man Wah restaurant takes center stage at Mandarin Oriental, Manila, when guest chef Lee Yiu Ming lords over an 11-day gastronomic promo, which began Nov. 5 at the hotel's award-winning Tin Hau restaurant. Available daily for lunch and dinner, the Man Wah festival offers an a la carte menu of Cantonese dishes.

Lauded by international food critics and discriminating connoisseurs as Hong Kong's finest gourmet restaurant, Man Wah is renowned for serving elegantly prepared Cantonese cuisine. During the promotion at Tin Hau, Chef Lee, who brings with him nearly 20 years of culinary experience culled from top restaurants in Hong Kong and China, collaborates with Tin Hau's chefs in preparing divine creations, including: Shredded Sesame Chicken, Braised Shark's Fin and Lobster in Chinese spinach soup, Stir-fried Scallops with assorted bell pepper and Kam Wah ham, Steamed Fillet of Garoupa with bean crumbs sauce in lotus leaf, Pan-fried King Prawns with minced beef in broad bean sauce, Sautéed Fillet of Sole in black bean sauce, Baked Fresh Crab with salted duck egg-yolk served in a casserole, and Sweetened Pumpkin Cream with sago amdaloe.

Man Wah is located at Mandarin Oriental's 25th floor, offering breathtaking views of Victoria Harbor and the bustling business district. The restaurant has consistently maintained its exacting standards of fine cuisine and exceptional service, and through its over 30 years of venerated existence, it remains as one of the favorite dining venues of celebrities and taipans who frequent this restaurant in Hong Kong's Central district. A Cantonese word translated as "Mandarin," Man Wah's surroundings reflect its name with its rosewood interiors, 10 exclusively commissioned original silk paintings of traditional mandarins, glazed antique Chinese flower vases, and gold-plated ceiling lamps fashioned to resemble birdcages. Call 750-8888.


GUEST chefs from Mandarin Oriental HK's grand Man Wah restaurant take over Mandarin Oriental Manila's Tin Hau kitchen for this special promotion.

EXQUISITE Cantonese dishes usually served at Man Wah in Hong Kong are being served for lunch and dinner at Mandarin Manila's Tin Hau.

Chinese dishes for diners with big appetites

DINING OUT

BIG BUDDHA Restaurant recently opened at the second level of Greenbelt 3. Over 100 palate-pleasers are included in its colorful menu: dim sum, congee, noodles, roasts, fried rice and toppings and vegetable, seafood, pork, beef and chicken dishes cooked in a variety of styles. Check out the roasting area where guests can see suckling pigs, Peking ducks, and other meats roasted right before their eyes. Among the rice toppings, the Assorted Seafoods on Rice and Roast Duck on Rice are bestsellers. For the main dishes, there are the Deep-fried Prawns with Orange Sauce and Deep-fried Pork with Spicy Salt. Likewise, make room for the restaurant's desserts of Big Buddha Special Buchi and Big Buddha Special Mango Pudding.

PEKING GARDEN is offering Peking Duck with a 30-percent off (à la carte orders only) for this month. This offer is available for lunch and dinner. Peking Garden also features its Hot Lunch, Cool Price set lunch selections. For P250+ per person, enjoy a Chinese meal for two, four or six persons, with one complimentary glass of iced tea per diner. It is available from Monday to Saturday. The restaurant is at the 2/L, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center, Makati City. Call 817-9066/67.

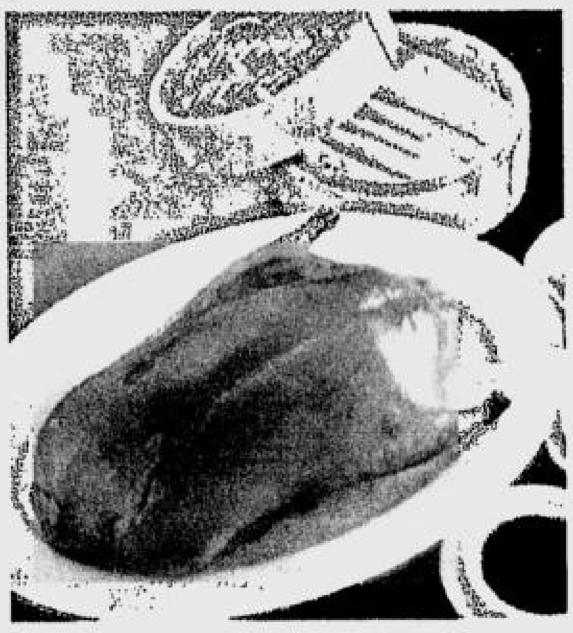
JADE GARDEN presents its suckling pig, Cantonese style, for group celebrations. One whole order of the suckling pig entitles diners to two free bottles of French red wine, while one bottle of the same is offered for every half order. Jade Garden serves its suckling pig with mini Chinese pancakes and special sauce. Jade Garden is at Greenbelt 1, Ayala Center, Makati City. Call 892-2319 or 812-4548.

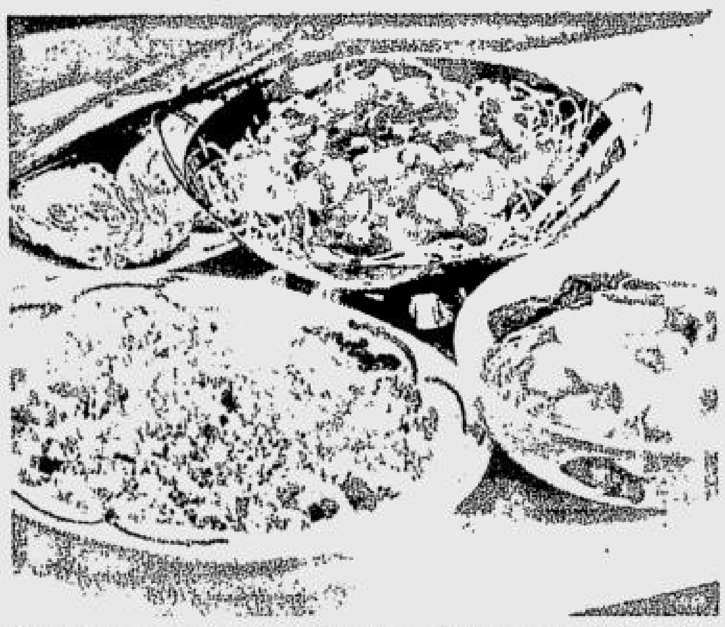
T.G.I. FRIDAY'S offers nine Mexican dishes that are sure to fire up your appetite. Say Ole! Nachos, quesadilla, enchiladas and chimichanga. The restaurant's three fajita varieties—Chicken Fajitas, Beef Fajitas and Combo, are hard to pass up as well. All Mexican Fiesta dishes are served with shredded lettuce, pico de gallo and sour cream. The Mexican Fiesta is available at T.G.I. Friday's restaurants at Glorietta, Robinsons Place Manila, Hotel Rembrandt in Quezon City, Alabang Town Center and The Brickroad of Sta. Lucia East.

CRAVINGS celebrates its 14th anniversary with new herb-infused menu items: Crispy Spareribs, Bangus Belly with Garlic Chips and Toasted Shallots, Fried Chicken with Oriental Sauce, Pan-Seared Lapu-lapu with Spicy Basil Sauce, Tapa Stir-Fry, Seafood Brochette, Chicken Donburi, Pork Donburi, Pad Thai, Chicken Florentine, Soy, Chicken, Baked Fish in Olive Oil and Pasta Salpicao. Cravings is also introducing the Mezze Feast this month, a Mediterranean concept in the preparation of soups, salads, appetizers and side dishes. The Cravings Restaurants and Cravings Cafés are in Shangri-La Mall, Robinsons Galleria, Robinsons Place Malate, Fraser Place Serviced Residences in Makati, Festival Supermall, Wilson Street and Katipunan Avenue. The Coffee Beanery is in Shangri-La Mall, Mandaluyong City.

CATCH "Israel: a Culinary Potpourri Festival" at the Marriott Hotel in Cebu City until Nov.9. Enjoy Cod Fish (bacalao) in tomato sauce, fish steak (Gefilte) in piquant sauce, fried cauliflowers, chicken bites with lemon and olives, the entrecote of lamb shoulder, lamb kebab, Couscous (buckwheat) with vegetables, and chicken *schnitzel* and lentil soup with cumin and carrots. The festival also features desserts like Muhallabi (rose-scented flan), fruit compote and *baklava*.

THE FISHING VILLAGE RESTAURANT offers crab specialty or Peking Duck on the house. Diners who order a Peking Duck or any of the restaurant's crab specialties get a gift certificate for the same item for their next dine-in visit. The offer is available only to dine-in guests who order à la carte until Nov. 16. The gift certificates are valid for 30 days. The restaurant is at 247 Padre Faura corner Roxas Boulevard in Ermita, Manila. Call 536-1916/8838.


THE BEST Peking Duck in town is at 30-percent off at Peking Garden this month.


YANG Chow Fried Rice, Pork Ribs and Taosi Crispy Noodles and Seafood Noodle Soup from Big Buddha Restaurant

T.G.I.FRIDAY'S Chicken Fajitas

MEALS in BOWLS!
P58
Quick Fried Beef
P55
Bistek Tagalog
Chicken Adobo
P58
Tropical Hut™
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Per DTI-NCR Permit No.2059, Series of 2002.

Special Treat

SPAMtastic Recipe

With more than five billion cans sold worldwide, SPAM is one brand that truly deserves to be called an icon. Sold in 45 countries, SPAM is produced in only four countries outside of the United States. In the Philippines, Purefoods-Hormel, Co. is proud to have SPAM in its brand portfolio. SPAM is such a versatile product as it is perfect as a meal, snack or recipe ingredient. Each can of SPAM comes with the assurance of great taste, high quality and convenience. It's no surprise that SPAM has such a huge following the world over.

Grab a can of SPAM and treat yourself to the unique and delicious goodness of an all-time favorite. You and your loved ones deserve only SPAM.

SPAMtastic trivia

During WWII, SPAM became a staple in soldiers' diets and earned much praise for feeding armies and civilians. World leader Dwight Eisenhower and Margaret Thatcher credited SPAM for its part in the war.

Recipe

EASY, OPEN-FACED SPAMWICH

You will need:

4 pcs.	English muffins
¼ cup	Magnolia Gold Butter
4pcs.	Magnolia Cheese Singles
1	215gm-can **SPAM**, sliced into thin rounds
2 pcs	salad tomatoes, sliced into thin rounds
1 pc	cucumber, sliced into thin rounds

Here's how: Spread butter on one side of English muffins. Top each muffin with a slice of cheese, two slices of SPAM and two slices each of tomatoes and cucumber. Heat in the microwave oven for 30 seconds over high setting or warm in an oven toast. Makes 4 servings.

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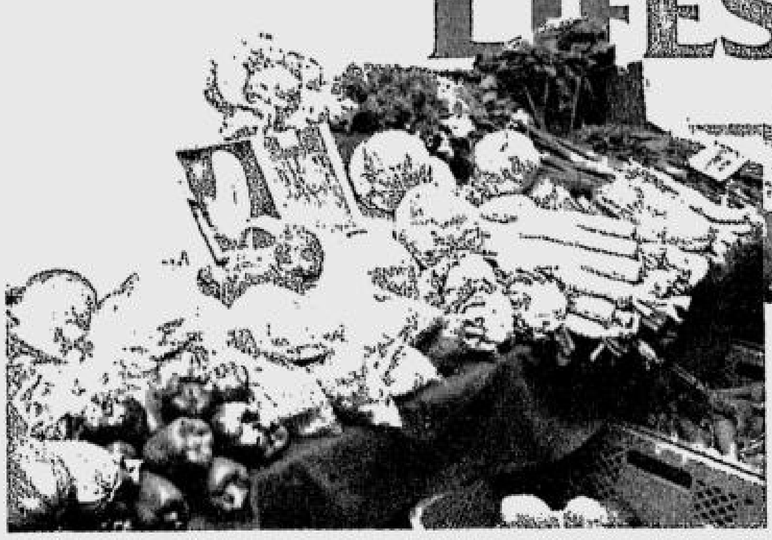
LIFESTYLE



Why organic cost more than commercial veggies

By Mara Pardo de Tavera
Contributor

CONSUMERS of naturally produced vegetables know the virtues of organic farming. But the rest of the world that consumes commercial vegetables asks, "Why is organic produce expensive?"

Compare commercially grown tomato with an organic one. Visually, both tomatoes look somewhat alike. The difference is that organic tomatoes cost P90 a kilo while commercial tomatoes cost only P60 per kilo.

It would seem logical to buy the cheaper produce. But the tomatoes aren't really the same. They are different in quality and value. Take pearls for example. A pearl that was formed in the wild would be much greater in value than a cultured pearl. We know this in principle. Apply this principle on how vegetables are grown and delivered to you.

Factory farms

The quality and value of vegetables greatly depend on farming practices.

Commercial farms work under the principle of economies of scale: "The more there is, the less it will cost." So they develop methods in putting out a greater yield per hectare than organic farms. They tend to be more large-scale, growing the same crop on large plots of land year after year.

> Medical research has linked cancer with the use of agricultural chemicals and pesticides frequently applied by commercial farms

For bigger crop yields, commercial farms implement soil enhancement with frequent use of fertilizers and herbicides. Pest control is also implemented by frequent spraying of pesticides, whether there are bugs or not.

Commercial farms also benefit from biotechnology to increase growth in less time. Suppose it would normally take 16 weeks to grow a batch of lettuce naturally. Biotechnology has cut that time to 11 weeks. That means commercial farms can harvest almost double the amount of produce using the same patch of land in a year.

Family affair

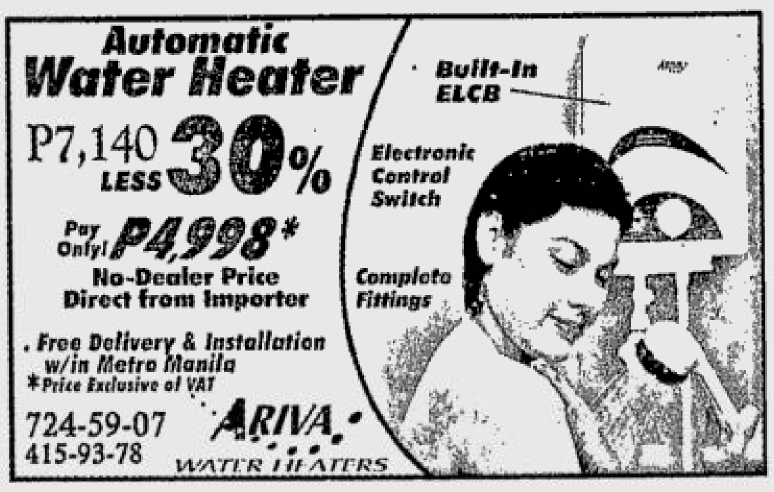
Most organic farms are small, independently owned and family-operated. They grow a variety of crops in a much smaller area. In Tagaytay, there are a number of independent organic farmers growing 15-20 different types of produce in a hectare.

Unlike its commercial counterparts frequently using synthetic chemicals, organic farming employs mainly labor-intensive practices such as weeding by hand, using green manure (composted, of course) as fertilizer, and putting crop covers to build up the soil. Crops are also closely monitored for pest control. In case of infestation, the affected area is only sprayed with natural elements like garlic.

You would think that technology would increase the cost of commercial produce. But commercial farms have an advantage over organic farms when it comes to keeping the cost down for the consumer. This is mainly because of existing infrastructure in the industry. These farms benefit from established and mostly government-assisted cooperatives that provide them with advantages in cost control, financing and credit line. In fact, many banks refuse to lend to organic farms that do not adhere to proven methods to increase crop yield.

In the Philippines, because of the lack of

WHY/ p.D4



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Traditionally, the Yuletide season arrives in the Philippines ahead of the rest of the world. But now, it'll get here much faster with Super Offer, an exclusive feature of HSBC's Rewards.

Redeem some of the hottest Rewards in town for less points and less cash -- up to 50% off! From 09 to 13 November (9 am to 5 pm), choose your rewards from the new Super Offer catalog and give us a call at 878-7880*. It's that simple!

Super Offer means getting more out of your credit card spend, especially during this Yuletide season. So keep on using your credit card from HSBC. If you still don't have one, apply now and let the world's local bank make it easier for you to get some of the best Rewards in town. For more details, call 878-7878.

*Open for Super Offer inquiries and redemptions on 09-13 November 2002, from 9 am to 5 pm. For calls outside Metro Manila, please call 1-800-1-888-8555.

Per DTI NCR Permit No. 1761. Series of 2002.

SUPER OFFER REWARDS

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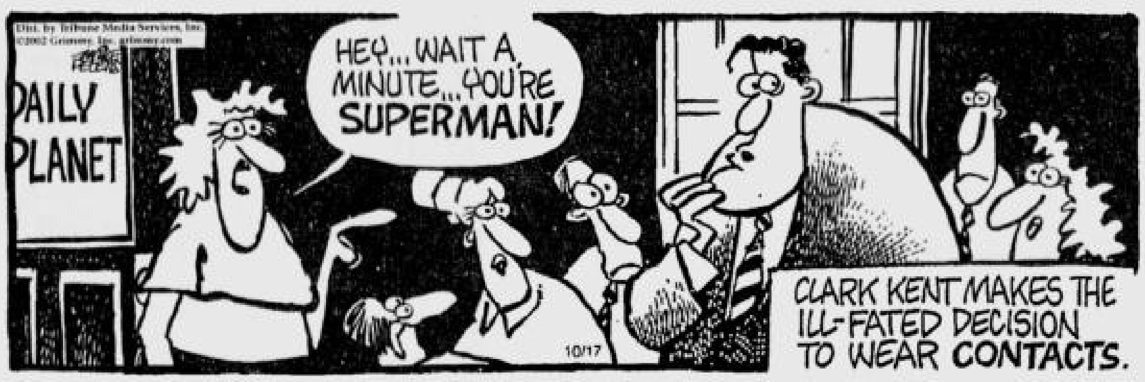
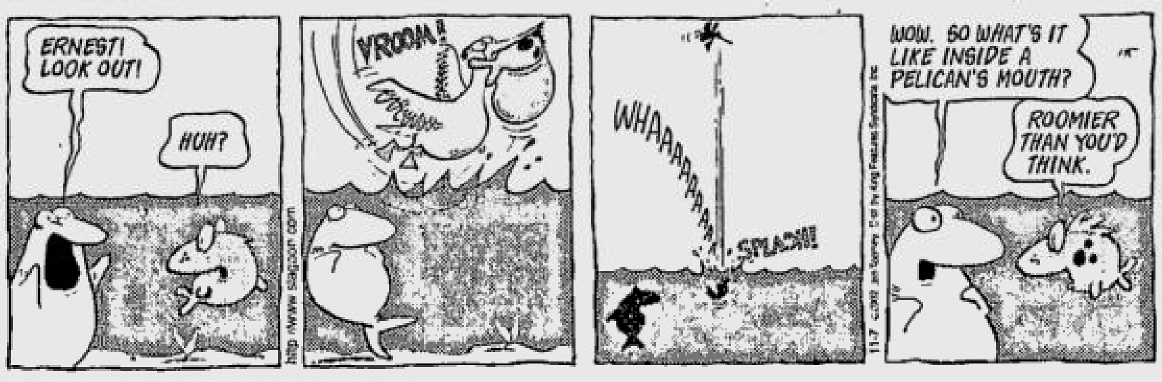
MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


Dist. by Tribune Media Services, Inc. ©2002 Grimmy, Inc. grimmy.com
DAILY PLANET
HEY... WAIT A MINUTE... YOU'RE SUPERMAN!
10/17
CLARK KENT MAKES THE ILL-FATED DECISION TO WEAR CONTACTS.

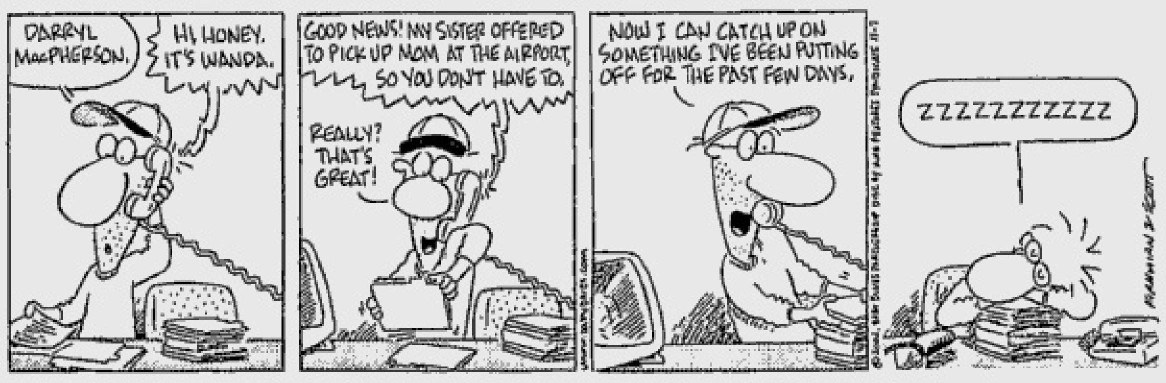
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


ERNEST! LOOK OUT!
HUH?
VROOM!
WHAAAAAAAAA
SPLASH!
WOW. SO WHAT'S IT LIKE INSIDE A PELICAN'S MOUTH?
ROOMIER THAN YOU'D THINK.
http://www.slagoon.com

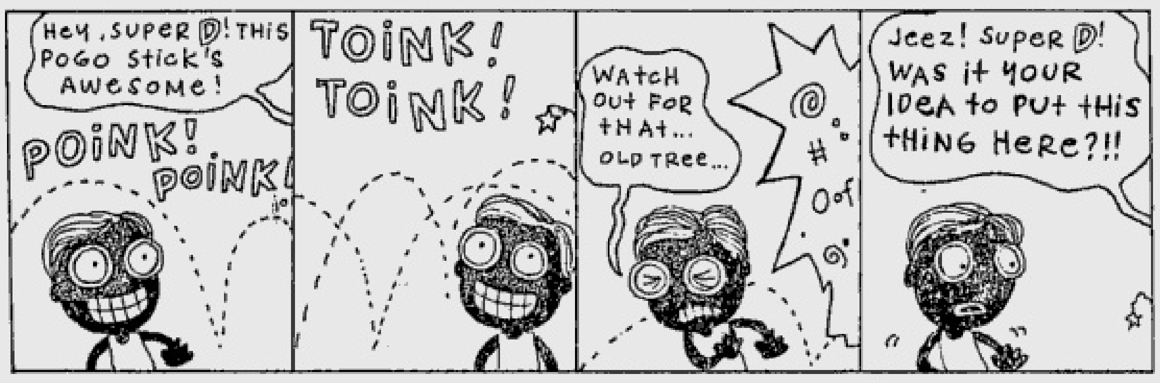
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DARRYL MacPHERSON.
HI, HONEY. IT'S WANDA.
GOOD NEWS! MY SISTER OFFERED TO PICK UP MOM AT THE AIRPORT, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO.
REALLY? THAT'S GREAT!
NOW I CAN CATCH UP ON SOMETHING I'VE BEEN PUTTING OFF FOR THE PAST FEW DAYS.
ZZZZZZZZZZZ
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

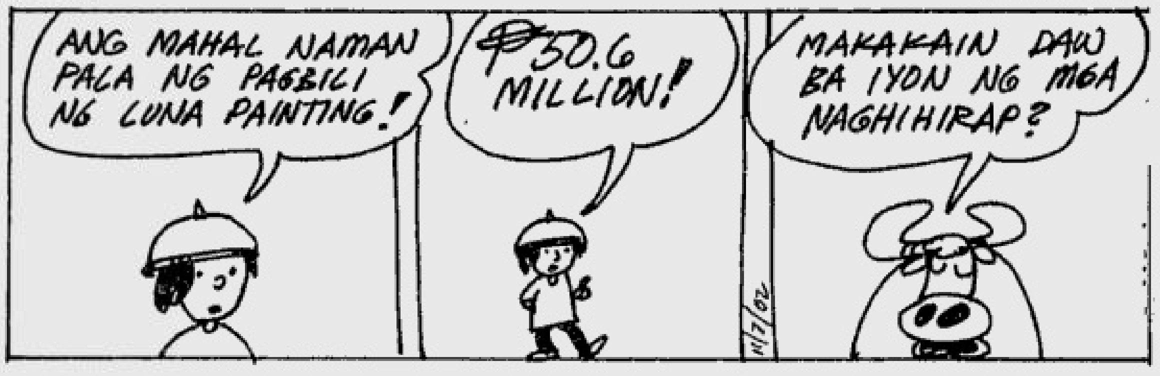
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BYLYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, Super D! This Pogo Stick's Awesome!
POINK! POINK!
TOINK! TOINK!
Watch out for that... old tree...
@ # Oof
Jeez! Super D! Was it your idea to put this thing here?!!

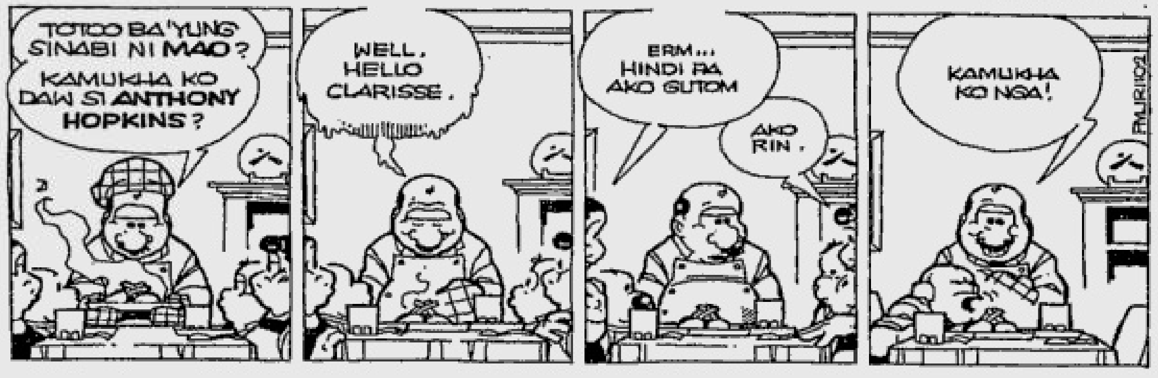
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANG MAHAL NAMAN PALA NG PAGBILI NG LUNA PAINTING!
₱50.6 MILLION!
MAKAKAIN DAW BA IYON NG MGA NAGHIHIRAP?
11/7/02

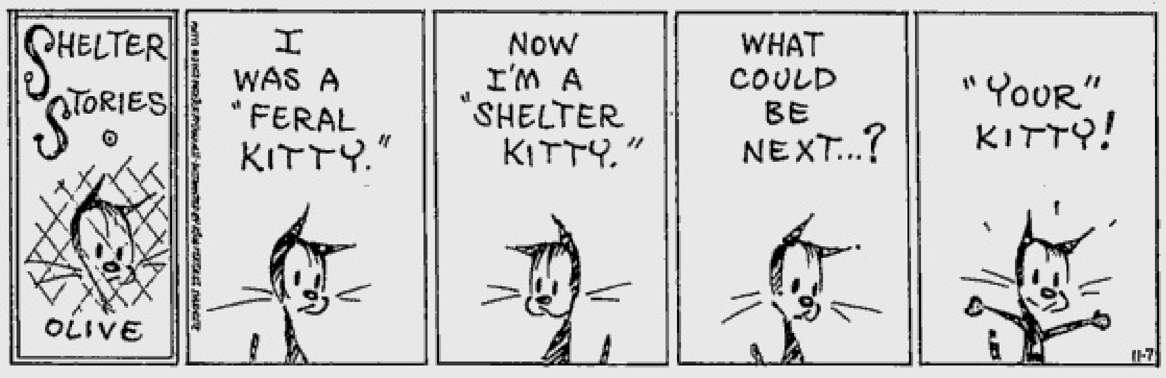
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TOTOO BA 'YUNG SINABI NI MAO?
KAMUKHA KO DAW SI ANTHONY HOPKINS?
WELL, HELLO CLARISSE.
ERM... HINDI PA AKO GUTOM
AKO RIN.
KAMUKHA KO NGA!
PMJR1102

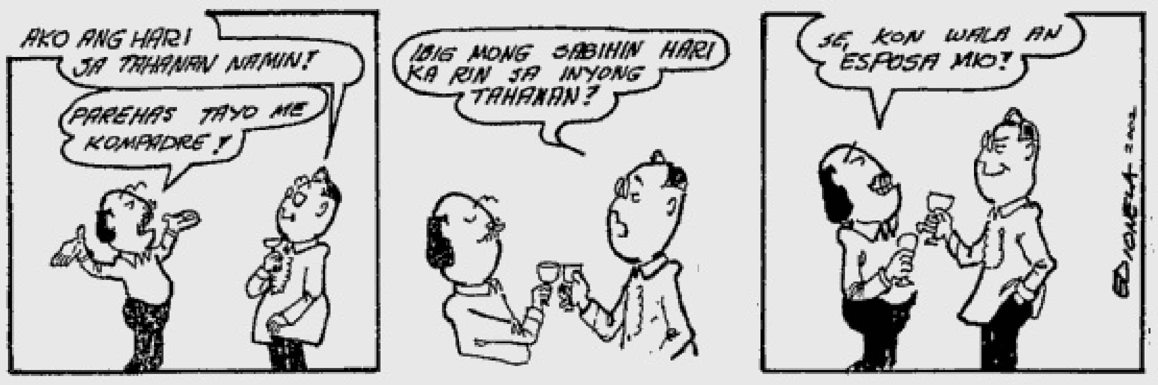
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
OLIVE
I WAS A "FERAL KITTY."
NOW I'M A "SHELTER KITTY."
WHAT COULD BE NEXT...?
"YOUR" KITTY!
11-7

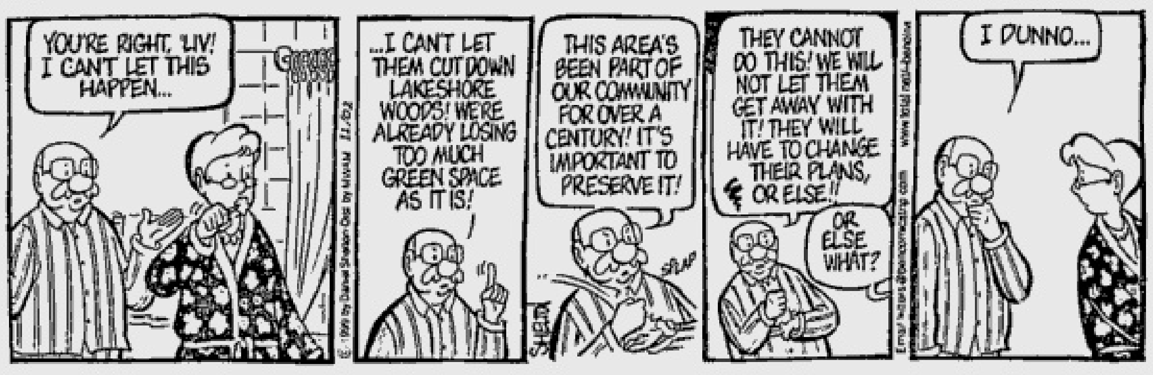
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


AKO ANG HARI SA TAHANAN NAMIN!
PAREHAS TAYO ME KOMPADRE!
IBIG MONG SABIHIN HARI KA RIN SA INYONG TAHANAN?
SE, KON WALA AN ESPOSA MIO!
EDIONELA 2002

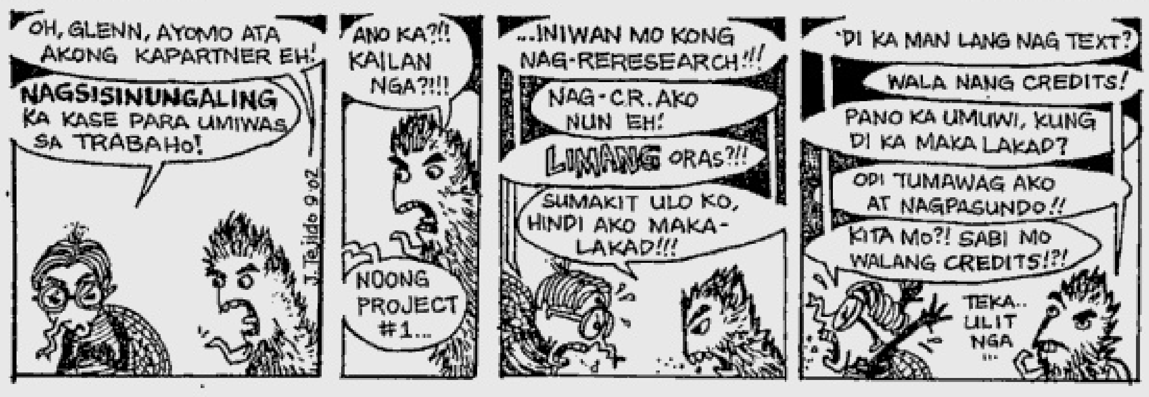
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


YOU'RE RIGHT, LIV! I CAN'T LET THIS HAPPEN...
...I CAN'T LET THEM CUT DOWN LAKESHORE WOODS! WE'RE ALREADY LOSING TOO MUCH GREEN SPACE AS IT IS!
THIS AREA'S BEEN PART OF OUR COMMUNITY FOR OVER A CENTURY! IT'S IMPORTANT TO PRESERVE IT!
SPLAP
THEY CANNOT DO THIS! WE WILL NOT LET THEM GET AWAY WITH IT! THEY WILL HAVE TO CHANGE THEIR PLANS, OR ELSE!!
OR ELSE WHAT?
I DUNNO...

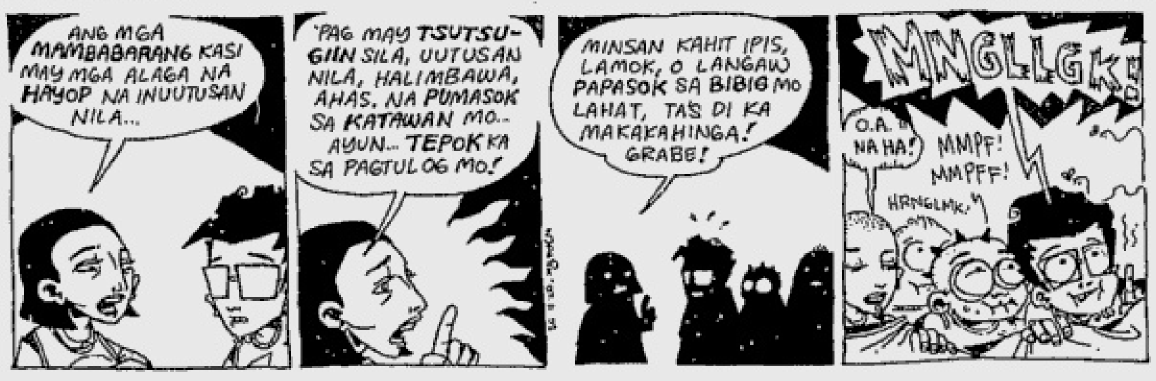
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


OH, GLENN, AYOMO ATA AKONG KAPARTNER EH!
NAGSISINUNGALING KA KASE PARA UMIWAS SA TRABAHO!
J. Tejido 9.02
ANO KA?!! KAILAN NGA?!!!
NOONG PROJECT #1...
..INIWAN MO KONG NAG-RERESEARCH!!!
NAG-C.R. AKO NUN EH!
LIMANG ORAS?!!
SUMAKIT ULO KO, HINDI AKO MAKA-LAKAD!!!
'DI KA MAN LANG NAG TEXT?
WALA NANG CREDITS!
PANO KA UMUWI, KUNG DI KA MAKA LAKAD?
OO! TUMAWAG AKO AT NAGPASUNDO!!
KITA MO?! SABI MO WALANG CREDITS!?!
TEKA.. ULIT NGA

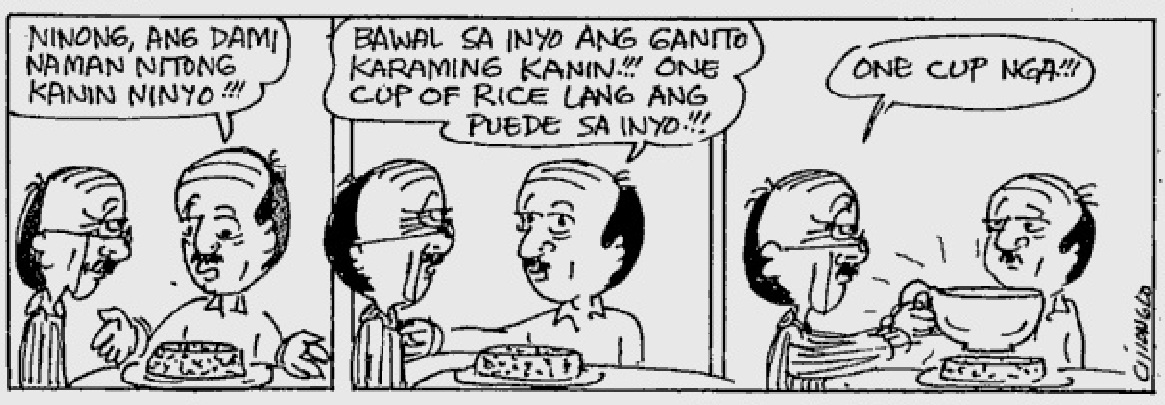
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ANG MGA MAMBABARANG KASI MAY MGA ALAGA NA HAYOP NA INUUTUSAN NILA...
'PAG MAY TSUTSUGIIN SILA, UUTUSAN NILA, HALIMBAWA, AHAS. NA PUMASOK SA KATAWAN MO.. AYUN... TEPOK KA SA PAGTULOG MO!
MINSAN KAHIT IPIS, LAMOK, O LANGAW PAPASOK SA BIBIG MO LAHAT, TAS DI KA MAKAKAHINGA! GRABE!
MNGLLGK!
O.A. NA HA!
MMPF! MMPFF!
HRNGLMK.

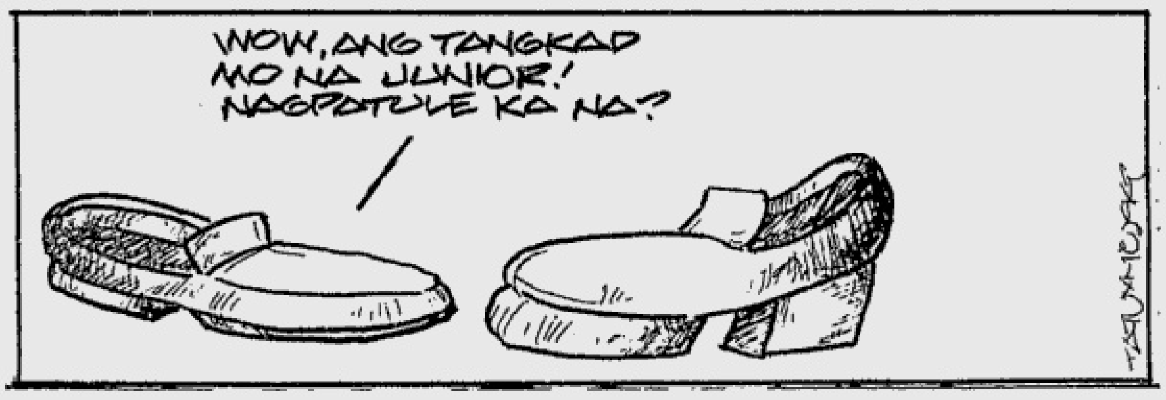
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NINONG, ANG DAMI NAMAN NITONG KANIN NINYO!!!
BAWAL SA INYO ANG GANITO KARAMING KANIN!!! ONE CUP OF RICE LANG ANG PUEDE SA INYO!!!
ONE CUP NGA!!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


WOW, ANG TANGKAD MO NA JUNIOR! NAGPATULE KA NA?

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Christopher Daniel Barnes, Joni Mitchell, Billy Graham, Dana Plato

Happy Birthday: Your positive nature will help you make a leap of faith this year that should result in some wonderful gains. Clear up old issues so that you can make the most of your good fortune. This is a year of progress; however, how far you get will be directly linked to what and how you deal with past issues. Your numbers are 10, 13, 24, 27, 32, 44

ARIES (March 21-April 19): This could be an upsetting day. Someone who may not have been completely honest with you may be threatening your position. Don't be pressured into confrontations.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Problems with older females may be distressing. Try to stay calm and don't bite off your nose to spite your face. Think about whether you really want to become involved in this situation.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): You may find that an emotional partner is somewhat upset by your lack of attention. Try to spend some quality time together if you want to revive the relationship.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You should be busy working in order to take your mind off past unpleasant experiences. Let go of the past and move on. Someone new has been watching you from a distance. Open your eyes and take a chance.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Organize an indoor sports event with friends that will be competitive and challenging. It will be a great success and wonderful fun for everyone. Be sure not to leave anyone out.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You may find it difficult to feel sympathetic toward those who really haven't pulled their weight. Think carefully before you start to criticize others. Try to remain impartial.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Travel or getting out with friends will be most enjoyable. Take a look at your wardrobe and see what additions would make you look more professional.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You can make quantum leaps in your professional direction today. Don't hesitate to go for interviews or start your own small business. You have the motivation and the discipline to accomplish either.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): You will be in seventh heaven when you receive recognition for your accomplishments. Your hard work is paying off and you are gaining the respect you want. Continue to work diligently.

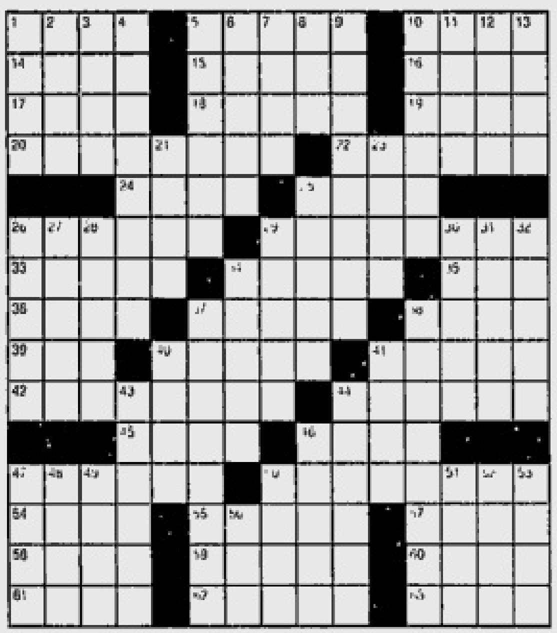
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): If you get involved in behind-the-scenes activities you will discover that there is more to learn than you first thought. Pick up books that will prepare you adequately and talk to those who have lots of experience.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Try to be patient with children or those less experienced than you. Organize fund-raising events that will help the less fortunate. Use your abilities and your connections to help give back to the community.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Get caught up on your letter writing and reading. You need to have a vast knowledge in order to address groups interested in your ideas. Do your research so you are prepared to answer any queries.

Birthday Baby: You will be a fierce competitor and a loyal friend. Your ability to be a team player will bring you popularity. You will show strength and determination throughout your life.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Roger Jurgovan
Potomac, MD

11/7/02

ACROSS
1 Coll. hotshot
5 Forbid
10 Expose
14 Late-night Jay
15 Maxim
16 Exploiter
17 Middle East sultanate
18 Pondered
19 5-dollar bills
20 Agreement
22 Pummel
24 Fad
25 Critical
26 Slander
29 Male voice
33 Clapton and Ambler
34 Jokers
35 Sebaceous cyst
36 Stable youngster
37 First, second and third
38 Pelvis bones
39 Poetic piece
40 Seethed
41 Prepared to pray
42 Short intervals of relief
44 Word before green or up
45 "Do __ others as..."
46 Moroccan seaport
47 Shot thrower
50 Imply
54 Med. school subject
55 Rye disease
57 Field
58 Stack
59 Seaside
60 Metal containers
61 Declare
62 More achy
63 Small whirlpool

DOWN
1 Political alliance
2 Brief note
3 Son of Judah
4 Shrink
5 Harm
6 Elicit
7 Rope fiber
8 Mature
9 Cardinals
10 Sideboard
11 Like
12 Russo of "Get Shorty"
13 In the past, in the past
21 Male sheep
23 "Exodus" author
25 Tested one's courage
26 Furnishings
27 Wear down
28 Collections of records
29 Grounds
30 Fledgling hooter
31 "Jurassic Park" star Sam
32 Related on mother's side
34 Brief appearance
37 Reinforce
38 Confidant
40 Monetary punishment
41 Annan of the U.N.
43 Tinker
44 Cook's mixture
46 Saw logs?
47 Dad
48 Part of UNLV
49 Fisherman's yarn
50 Sikorsky of helicopters
51 Dry
52 Cultivate
53 A piece of cake?
56 Greek letter

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

J	A	C	K	■	C	H	A	T	■	A	D	A	M	S
A	L	O	E	■	R	O	V	E	■	P	E	N	A	L
W	I	N	E	■	A	M	E	N	■	P	A	T	I	O
S	T	E	P	O	V	E	R	T	H	E	L	I	N	E
■	■	■	■	N	A	Y	■	■	E	A	T	■	■	■
R	A	B	B	I	T	■	T	B	A	R	■	S	A	C
I	G	L	O	O	■	B	R	A	T	■	C	E	L	L
F	L	A	U	N	T	A	U	T	H	O	R	I	T	Y
L	O	S	T	■	H	I	S	S	■	O	O	Z	E	D
E	W	E	■	A	R	T	S	■	A	M	P	E	R	E
■	■	■	A	C	E	■	■	A	L	P	■	■	■	■
F	L	I	R	T	W	I	T	H	T	H	E	L	A	W
L	A	R	G	O	■	S	H	E	A	■	C	U	R	E
A	M	O	U	R	■	L	E	A	R	■	H	A	M	S
G	E	N	E	S	■	E	N	D	S	■	O	U	S	T

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11/7/02

Award-winning recipes use versatile dry peas and lentils

MAKE your dishes more healthy and exciting by adding dry peas and lentils into it. Dry peas and lentils are two of the versatile and healthiest foods on earth. They are rich in folate, or folic acid, thus very essential for expecting moms or women of childbearing age. Also, they can help reduce your risk of cancer and heart disease, and keep you healthy and energetic.

Easy Cook Dry Peas and Lentils, with the Center for Culinary Arts, Manila, recently held a cooking competition to prove the former's "premiumness" and versatility. More than 20 students participated in the event; all came out with original and interesting recipes using Easy Cook Dry Peas and Lentils as the main ingredients.

Three recipes emerged as winners: Burger Lentils (grand prize, by Roel Vargas), Lentils in Rice (second place, by Senen Araneta), and Bacon and Lentils in Riscossa Soup (third place, by Kerwin Funtanilla).

Easy Cook Dry Peas and Lentils takes pride in sharing these healthy and award-winning recipes that you can try at home.

Burger Lentils

100 g Easy Cook Dry Peas and Lentils
37 g chopped onion
37 g minced garlic
37 g chopped red bell pepper
37 g chopped green bell pepper
1 pc medium-sized tomato, sliced round
¼ kg lettuce
1 pc egg
2 tbsp mayonnaise
2 tbsp catsup
2 slices cheese
¼ tbsp paprika
¼ tbsp cayenne
1 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper
Cooking oil as needed
2 pc burger buns

Soak lentils or boil until tender. Sauté onion until caramelized. Add garlic, red and green bell peppers, then add the presoaked or pan-boiled lentils. Season to taste. Cook until lentils are done. Set aside.

To make burger patties, mix egg and lentils mixture. Measure about 150 g of mixture and shape into patties. Set aside and chill. After the patties have set, pan-fry in oil. Brown both sides, then finish in 300°F oven until done.

To assemble, heat the burger buns, spread mayonnaise on the bottom buns, then top with cheese, lettuce, a slice of tomato and add the cooked burger patties. Top with catsup and mustard. Place the other half of the bun on top. Serve with mashed potatoes or French fries.

Bacon and Lentils in Riscossi Soup

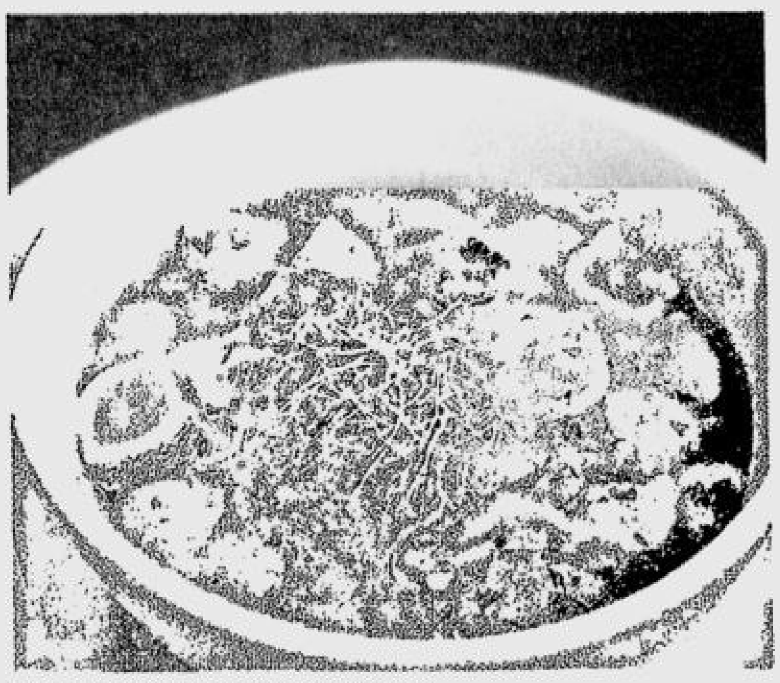
75 g bacon, minced
50 g onion, chopped
40 g celery, diced
30 ml red wine
80 g tomato concasse
600 ml white stock
120 g Easy Cook Dry Lentils
90 g riscossa pasta
30 g grated Parmesan cheese
7 g parsley, minced
40 g alfalfa sprouts
80 g butter
1 tsp salt and pepper

Render bacon in butter. Sauté onions and celery, then deglaze with red wine and tomato concasse. Add stock; boil, skim and simmer. In a separate saucepan, cook pasta and Easy Cook Dry Lentils. When pasta and lentils are done, mix into bacon and tomato concasse mixture. Garnish with Parmesan cheese, parsley and alfalfa sprouts before serving.

Lentils in Rice

100 g Easy Cook Dry Green Lentils
100 g lamb, trimmed
100 g short grain rice
80 g cucumber, diced
125 g yogurt
60 g onions, chopped
60 g butter
2 tsp olive oil
Dash of salt and pepper

Boil Easy Cook Dry Lentils in a pot with 1½ c water for 10 minutes. Sauté onions and lamb in butter and olive oil, then add the cooked lentils. Cook or crack rice for 20-25 minutes with the cooked lentils. Garnish with yogurt and herbs.



BACON and Lentils in Riscossi Soup

Culinary mag holds home baker's bazaar

FOOD magazine will hold its "Home Baker's Bazaar" on Nov. 9 and 10 at the Rockwell Tent.

The bazaar features baking and food entrepreneurs, enthusiasts and hobbyists as well as suppliers of food and baking equipment. There will also be booths selling various dishes and treats that have been featured in Food magazine.

Now on its seventh year, Food's November issue features delicious food gifts that can be purchased for the holiday season. The cover story features a pre-holiday menu that includes roasted rack of lamb, garlicky potatoes, holiday wreath salad and strawberry torte. Other recipes include Dorothy Ferreria's Buche de Noel, Myrna Segismundo's Soyless Chicken Pork Adobo, Anne Castro's Mustard Red Pepper Bangus Belly; a step-by-step procedure for making soft pretzels and a two-week menu guide.

Also in the issue, top nutritionist Sanirose Orbeta warns against diet fads, while Doris Nuyda writes about a farm in Tagaytay where weekend farmers can grow their greens.

Cooking demo set

TIRED of the typical dishes served on every *noche buena* table? Fret no more because the San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center will present new recipes to enliven your family and guests this Yuletide season through this year's Wish Upon the Culinary Stars.

With Heny Sison and Sylvia Reynoso-Gala's expertise in baking and cooking mouthwatering treats, plus chef Larry Celeridad's demonstration on embellishing ham and cheese platters, *noche buena* will absolutely be the highlight of the season.

The event, which also marks the first anniversary of San Miguel Great Food Club, will also feature games, raffles and food samplings. So be part of this celebration at the San Miguel head office cafeteria on Nov. 23, 1-5 p.m.

Register with Tin or Rowena at 671-9876 local 402-405 (Monday-Friday). Don't forget to present any two wrappers of Magnolia Gold, Magnolia Cheezee, Magnolia Queso de Bola, Magnolia Cream Cheese, Purefoods Corned Beef, Purefoods Carne Norte and/or Purefoods Fiesta Ham on the day of the event so you can get a raffle ticket.

As the event is on a first-come, first-serve basis, seats are limited.

The first and only one of its kind in the Philippines!

"Now, there's someone who'll take care of you in the event of an accident - kahit 75 years old ka na!"

Rosa Rosal

PHILAM DIRECT

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Knights of 'adobo,' or the medieval connection in a favorite Filipino dish

THE JOYFUL COOK

Felice Prudente Sta.Maria

GUESTS were coming over for lunch. And they wanted The Joyful Cook (TJC) to make a heart-friendly fusion *adobo*. There was challenge in perfecting a time-honored tradition. However, times often cultivate new dietary needs, and the freedom of expression found individual expression through new recipes and cooking techniques.

Kitchen duels

The chicken breasts had been marinated overnight in organic soy and red wine vinegar flavored with crushed fresh garlic, bay leaf, dried oregano and basil, chartreuse *siling haba (Capsicum annum* Linn.*)*, Spanish paprika and roughly ground black peppercorn. Then TJC would simply pan-fry the breasts in light olive oil, remove the meat to a serving plate and turn the remaining oil and marinade into a sauce with a little chicken stock. Before serving, she would bless the dish with a dribble of aromatic virgin olive oil and common balsamic vinegar.

For contrast, she made a farmhouse favorite that had been simmered for hours. One of the many traditional *adobo* variations had chunks of pork layered with thick fat and hefty cuts of free-range chicken that was very tasty. She fried each piece till it had a nice reddish-gold color. Then everything was allowed to simmer in sugarcane vinegar and light soy seasoned with fresh garlic, bay leaf, *siling haba*, roughly ground black peppercorn and a pinch of sugar. While tenderizing the meat, the flavor and spices were also being mixed in slow cooking. She would serve it with a generous amount of chicken livers and crushed into the sauce.

But no Cavite *adobo* lunch is complete without a large platter of freshly netted prawns or medium-size shrimp steamed till pink and buttery inside. There were the usual sauce alternatives to mix according to one's preference: a palm vinegar with fresh garlic, tiny bird's eye chili peppers, first-class golden *patis*, finely sliced shallots, brined green mango or minced brined *paho*. Also added was a bottle of homemade, finely grated green papaya pickles, which is always welcome amid today's commercial rivalry.

There are as many recipes of this signature dish as there are cooks, and as many favorite recipes as there are childhoods

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Filipino chivalry

A friend from Batangas, Mario, tagged along. Her mind still focused on the origins of *adobo*, TJC inquired: "Now tell me, who were the *tirong*? Your province is supposed to have been their territory. Were they really Robinhood types as described by Teodoro Kalaw Sr. in his book about Filipino customs and morality? Did they really dress in all-black and wear *salakot*? Did they really ride carabaos into battle armed only with a trusty bolo? Were they something like Filipino knights?"

Mario's reply was: "There is the tradition that the *tirong* were gallant like European knights. However, I've never heard any Maid Marian or Camelot legends, if that's what you mean. By the 1950s dictionaries were defining *tirong* as a bully, a nasty guy. I guess it depends whose side you're on, as in many of the good-guy/bad-guy controversies that give time its color."

Dressing knights

Putting aside talks about The Green Knight and chivalry, the friends decided to sample the *adobos*. As they enjoyed the contrast of different old and new approaches to making *adobo*, TJC shared her historical findings about the dish.

"*Adobar*, the Spanish root for *adobo* and *adobado*, came from the French word *adober*. It means 'to dress a knight in armor.' That same meaning was brought to the land of El Cid, where it took another meaning, that is, to dress meat, particularly in vinegar," she said.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, Spanish settlers and soldiers living in Manila's Intramuros experienced food rationing, particularly of pork and chicken. *Adobo* may have been popular in pre-refrigeration days since the meat could be preserved beyond a day by being packed heavily in lard like *chorizos*.

In the 1800s, the Spanish cookbooks used young goat, capon and old turkey for *adobo* seasoned with bay leaf, garlic, salt, black pepper, white onion and parsley. The characteristic stewing in vinegar was present in all *adobo* recipes of the era. The vinegar used in Spanish cooking came from grapes. In those days, *adobo* was a slow-cooked dish that could be left to simmer over the firewood.

Food coloring

In Manila, annatto, which was introduced in Mexico, was used as a coloring agent for *adobo* and other food in the early 1900s.

As soy sauce became readily available, it was added to *adobo*. One brought an empty glass bottle to the market or *sari-sari* store to be filled with soy sauce made by small cottage industries. Perhaps soy sauce was preferred since there was no ready-made annatto coloring. One had to steep annatto seeds in warm water then strain off the coloring extract.

In Taal, chicken *adobo* is distinctly yellow from turmeric. It recalls the Spanish *escabeche*, another dish that uses vinegar prominently.

The Spanish *escabeche* is not like Filipino *escabeche*—fried fish smothered in golden sweet and sour sauce often decorated with slices of onion, ginger and red bell pepper. Rather, it is a mildly seasoned recipe that becomes golden from saffron, a Middle Eastern flower that does not grow in Philippine islands. *Escabeche* was usually prepared on Good Friday and Black Saturday in many homes.

Since vinegar made the cooked fish edible without refrigeration, *escabeche* could be prepared ahead of time for lunch, which allowed cooks, homemakers and their staff free time to participate in Lenten rituals.

Usually the sacrificial sunset meal was just vegetables or some other simple *collacion*. This is to keep the style of fasting and abstinence that by today's standard may be considered severe.

Like its stewed French cousin the *daub*, *adobo* is traditionally cooked in a clay vessel such as the *palayok*.

Catfish, mudfish, shucked oysters, squid, squab, duck, snipe, grasshopper and *kangkong* (*Ipomoea aquatica*, swamp cabbage) can be done *adobo* style with vinegar from *nipa*, coconut, *kaong*, *sago* or sugarcane. There are as many *adobo* recipes as there are cooks, and as many favorite recipes as there are childhoods.

"Why every Filipino boy is fondly called Adobo Boy by his mother and *yaya*," is a thought Sandok has, with Excalibur's twinkle on his halo.

Next: The best seasonings for any meal

Why organic . . .

From page D1

consumer demand, organic farm cooperatives are a fledgling industry.

So far, these cooperatives can only provide service by getting organic produce to specialized markets like our very own Organic Market and the organic section of Rustan's Supermarket. But transporting organic produce (most especially from the Visayas and Mindanao) to the market just adds to the costs.

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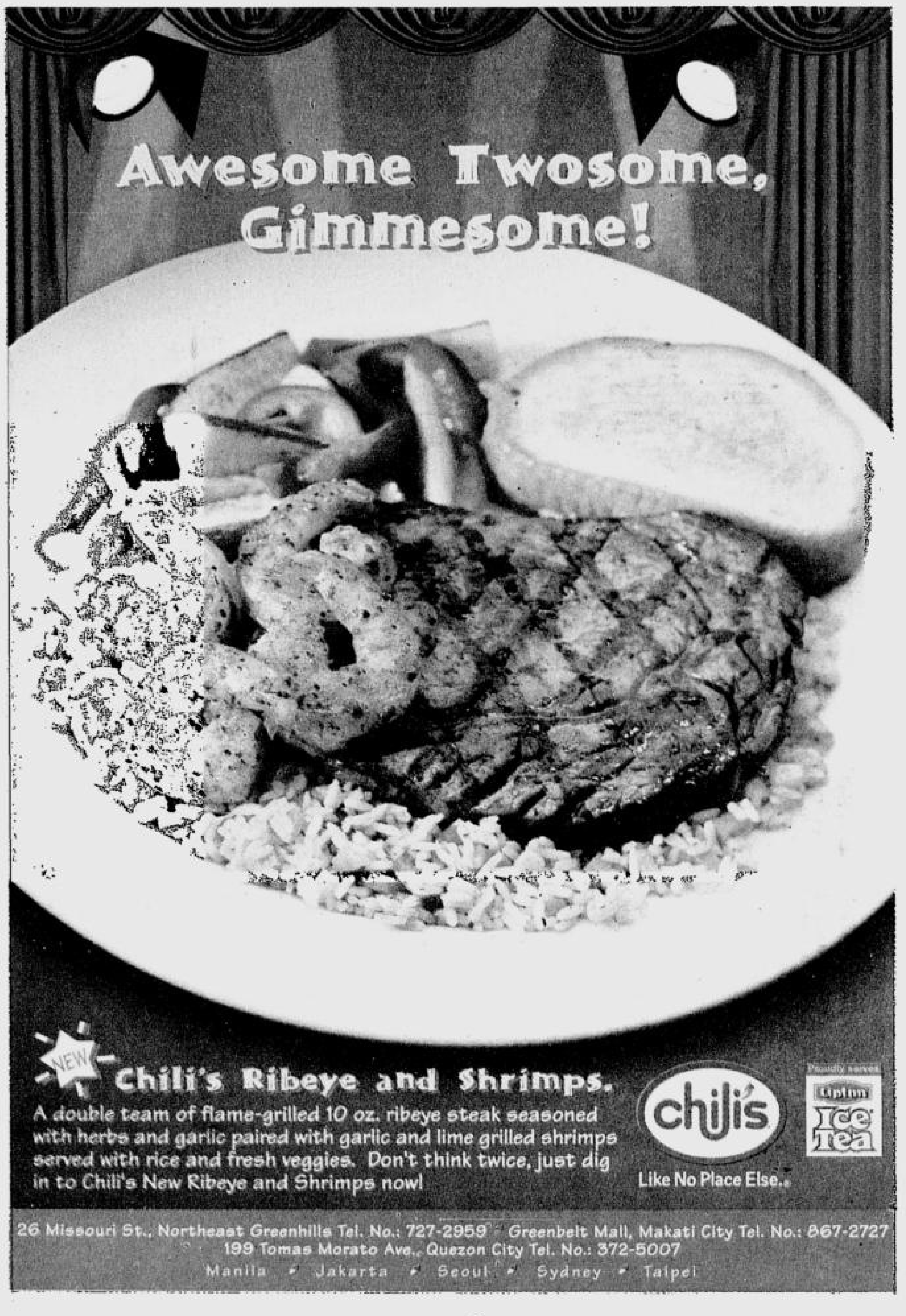

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Malacañang names lawyer to replace MTRCB chief

Story on Page A2

WHAT'S INSIDE

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  NEWS /A3
- **RP assured of Saudi oil**
  NEWS /A5

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Friday, November 8, 2002 ★★ 80 pages / 6 sections / vol. 17 / no. 333 P15

Winona Ryder convicted of shoplifting

BEVERLY HILLS, California—After all the hype, all the insinuation and a defense conspiracy theory that could only have been written in Hollywood, ac-

WINONA/ A20

"INNOCENCE" lost to a verdict of guilty of grand theft and vandalism after a six-day trial.

Abadia under fire for exposing plot

CRADLING the next Macapagal-Arroyo generation in her arms, a delighted President says she prays for her first grandchild to grow up "to be a good servant of the Lord." VAL HANDUMON

'They should thank me for coming out in the open'

By Martin P. Marfil, Juliet Labog-Javellana and Rocky Nazareno

THE BEARER of bad news drew flak from his own military establishment, members of both Houses of Congress, the Church and, of course, Malacañang.

"You should verify real happenings, not real fantasies," Gen. Benjamin Defensor, Armed Forces chief of staff, said, referring to retired Gen. Lisandro Abadia, who confirmed on Wednesday reports that a coup plot was in the works.

Abadia, a former AFP chief of staff, said he himself had been getting calls from junior officers involved in the recruitment of soldiers for a power grab. He said "the recruitment has gone to the level of colonels and battalion commanders," or officers in control of fighting units.

Abadia himself told the INQUIRER that instead of getting slapped around, he should be congratulated for coming out in the open. He's the highest officer so far to confirm the existence of coup movements.

He met with Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo yesterday and raised the grievances of military men.

"I even showed him the text messages that I received from some officers to show that I know what I'm talking about," Abadia said.

Some of the messages hinted for him to lead and guide the destabilization plot.

Bataan Rep. Antonino Roman said Abadia's statements were "by themselves destabilizing" to the economy. "Why he made this public is beyond me. As a former chief of staff, he is expected to be more circumspect," he said in a statement.

Rep. Raul Gonzalez, deputy House Speaker for the Visayas, agreed saying that frequent rumors about a power grab could destabilize the government.

Abadia said the recruitment of men for the coup was gaining ground because of a lot of issues against the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

ABADIA/ A18

Fil-Ams post victories in US polls

By Jennie L. Ilustre
PDI Washington correspondent

WASHINGTON—Filipino-Americans easily won in their reelection bids in Tuesday's midterm elections, which saw President George W. Bush emerge even stronger after campaigning all-out for the Republican Party to keep the Lower House and retake the Senate.

Leading the Fil-Am pack is Democratic Congressman Robert Cortez Scott, the only Filipino-American representative in the US Congress. *(See related story on Page A2.)*

Scott, who ran unopposed, is going back for a sixth term in the 108th Congress, which starts in January 2003.

Scott, whose mother is of Philippine ancestry, represents the area of Hampton Roads, Virginia, located close to 300 miles south of this US capital.

Hampton Roads is near the Navy town of Norfolk and has a considerable Filipino-American population.

Scott is a consistent co-sponsor of health and burial benefits legislation for Filipino World War II veterans. His office is next door to Rep. Bob Filner, Democrat from San Diego, California, and original co-sponsor of H.R. 3645, a health care bill in this year's 107th Congress.

"I work closely with Bob on Filipino veterans bills, and I want to keep an open channel of communication with you and other Filipino-American advocates on this issue," he told a group of Philippine Embassy and veterans officials who met with him last year.

Tracking the races for his online newspaper, Rodney C. Salinas told the INQUIRER other Filipino-Americans in the East Coast also sailed to victory.

Salinas is president of Rainmaker Political Group LLC and publisher of Politi-

FIL-AMS/ A18

Gloria goes straight to visit 'apo'

By Norman Bordadora

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo arrived yesterday afternoon from Hanoi and went straight to the Makati Medical Center to visit her days-old grandchild, the first for the First Couple.

She did not deliver the customary arrival statement and ignored the questions on the revived coup rumors posed by reporters waiting at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Among those waiting at the Naia were government caretakers Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr. and Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo, who told reporters of the President's decision to do away with her arrival statement.

The only question Ms Macapa-

GLORIA/ A18

GMA told US not to include MILF in list of terror groups

By Dona Pazzibugan

HANOI (via PLDT)—It was the President's call.

The decision to leave the Moro Islamic Liberation Front off the US list of terrorist organizations was because President Macapagal-Arroyo told the United States so.

In a late-night chat with reporters Wednesday night, Ms Macapagal said US Embassy Charge d'Affaires Robert Fitts brought up the matter with her several months ago.

She said she told Fitts then that some "MILF elements" were implicated in terrorist attacks but the "MILF organization itself" denied that it was behind them.

Back home, however, top security officials sang a different tune.

PNP Deputy Director General Edgardo Aglipay said he would welcome a US move to list the MILF as a terror group, because it would work in favor of the Philippines.

Aglipay, head of the newly formed police-military Task Force

GMA/ A19

WALANG BOMBA KASI BAHALA SI LORD DITO

Dogs guard house of God

By Armand N. Nocum

EVEN the house of God has gone to the (bomb-sniffing) dogs.

Members of the Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary parish were yesterday surprised to see the K-9s being led by their handlers into the historic Binondo Church.

DOGS/ A6

Nat'l Museum rapped over 'useless' security

By Juliet Javellana and Christian Esguerra

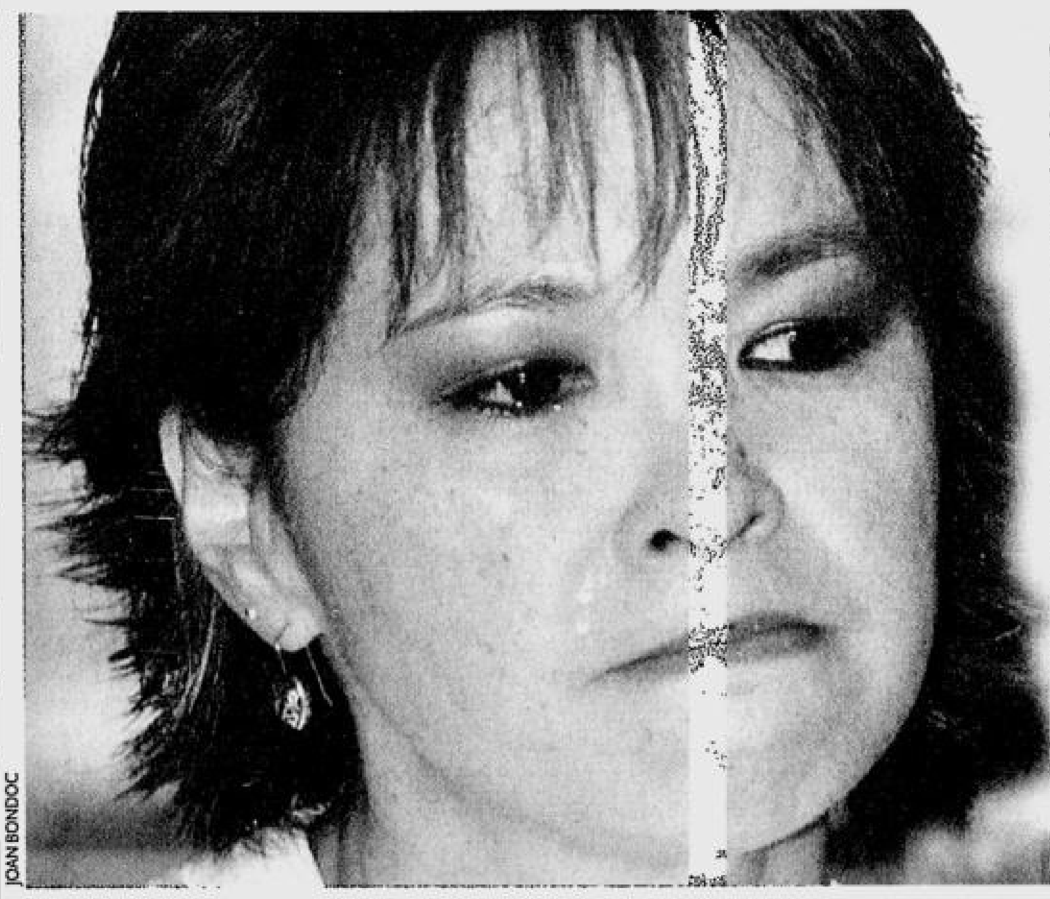
APPARENTLY security at the National Museum is itself a museum piece.

The museum director said the other day that she has already alerted the International Council of Museums about the theft of the Sto. Niño Dormido, but the man who caused the donation of the centuries-old work of art all but questioned the museum's useless security.

Director Corazon Alvina said she sent the worldwide museum alert to intercept the possible sale of the ecclesiastical piece, which she confirmed was stolen from the museum sometime last August.

Carved by Filipino artisans from solid ivory from Macau, the figure is that of a Baby Jesus sleeping on a four-poster bed of silver with a gold banner held by an angel. It was taken out of the country in 1764 by the British, but eventually reacquired by the Central Bank in an auction in the 1980s. The Central Bank, under Governor Jaime Laya, later

NAT'l/ A6



JOAN BONDOC

OPEN WOUND
Pain and frustration are etched on the face of Kaye Torres as she observes the first death anniversary of her mother, the revered and well-loved actress Nida Blanca, with relatives, friends and fans with Mass at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City.
In a "Justice for Nida" T-shirt, Kaye expresses impatience that the wheels of justice are grinding exceedingly slow. But she also understands, she says, that the NBI has to contend with due process to get her mother's killers and that she is willing to wait. *(Story on Page A26)*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms becoming widespread rains over Eastern Luzon.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/11/08/02

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

PEA execs quit, finally

By Carlito Pablo

THE MEMBERS of the board of the Public Estates Authority have finally heeded pleas by Malacañang and agreed to resign.

"They are all good soldiers of the President and they know this," Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

Consequently, Tiglao said, the Palace was hopeful that former trade secretary Rizalino Navarro would accept the offer to serve as chair of the PEA.

Tiglao said the resignation of the PEA board would help "clear the air" as an investigation of the alleged overpricing by about P600 million of the President Diosdado Macapagal Boulevard in the reclamation area fronting Manila Bay was being conducted.

"We want to put in a new board with known integrity," Tiglao said.

NAVARRO: Palace choice

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier said she was willing to accept the resignation of PEA board members and that she was ready to appoint an interim board.

Speaking through PEA director Rodolfo Tuazon, board members had stuck to the position they would quit only after they had been cleared of the alleged overpricing disclosed by fellow director Sulficio Tagud Jr.

The Palace had pleaded to the officials to just accede to the President's request on at least two occasions.

Tiglao said the board members' reluctance to quit might have stemmed from their desire to first have their names cleared.

"They think they've been insulted too much by Mr. Tagud," Tiglao said.

Tiglao said he learned of the board members' decision to resign from presidential legal counsel Avelino Cruz.

But he said he did not know whether Tagud would also turn in his resignation.

The alleged overpricing is being investigated by the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

Palace taps lawyer to replace chief censor

MALACAÑANG has appointed lawyer Dennis Manicad as officer in charge and chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board.

Manicad, a lawyer, replaces Marilen Dinglasan, who earlier went on leave after she was accused of graft activities by MTRCB employees.

"We want to make this transition smooth," Presidential Spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said of Manicad's appointment.

Tiglao said that Dinglasan, a former high school classmate of President Macapagal-Arroyo, may be given a new position in government.

"She prefers to be given other tasks," Tiglao said.

Asked when a new appointment will be made for Dinglasan, Tiglao said: "She wants to rest for a while."

Tiglao said that Dinglasan "suffered a lot" when accusations of irregular activities were hurled against her by MTRCB employees.

According to available papers, Manicad was appointed board member of MTRCB on Oct. 10.

Fil-Am bets lose big in California

By Percy D. Della

SACRAMENTO, California—Two Filipino-American candidates left standing after the June primaries in California bowed to formidable opponents in Tuesday's general elections.

Tom Santos of Sacramento lost to Bill Leonard, a termed-out Los Angeles-area assemblyman for the District 2 seat on the Board of Equalization. Leonard in whose honor a portion of the Antelope Valley Freeway is named, garnered 924,180 votes to Santos' 659,067.

It was the second losing campaign for the 51-year-old Santos for a position on California's powerful but little-noticed tax body. The board oversees the collection of $44 billion in taxes—more than half of the state's general fund.

Last year, Santos, a realtor and tax consultant, also lost a run for the US congressional seat in southern Sacramento County.

Routed badly

Ely de la Cruz Ayao, also 51, a realtor and a political neophyte, ran into a buzz saw against Cindy Montanez, mayor of San Fernando, a suburb of Los Angeles. Montanez, a student activist of note during her college days, easily beat Ayao for the 39th state assembly district. Montanez raised record cash to beat her opponent in the June primaries.

So safe was the district for Montanez after the June vote that Democratic bigwigs in the statehouse already counted her as a newest member of the Latino caucus long before Tuesday's elections.

For the record, Montanez received 76.1 percent of the vote (33,553) compared to Ayao's 10,546 (23.9 percent)

Ill-prepared

The ill-prepared and lightly funded campaigns of both Santos and Ayao, formerly of Pampanga and Camarines Sur, respectively, put the Filipino American community back on the microscope for political observers to dissect.

The twin-defeats also troubled Filipino American leaders. Despite their numbers—roughly one million in the Golden State—Fil-Ams again failed to send one of their own to Sacramento's corridors of power.

As ever, political empowerment remains elusive for the Filipino community in California—the bellwether for such a feat.

It was a resounding victory for Republicans in Tuesday's polls. They won control of both houses of Congress, giving President Bush strong backing for his agenda, including a war on Iraq, or the next two years.

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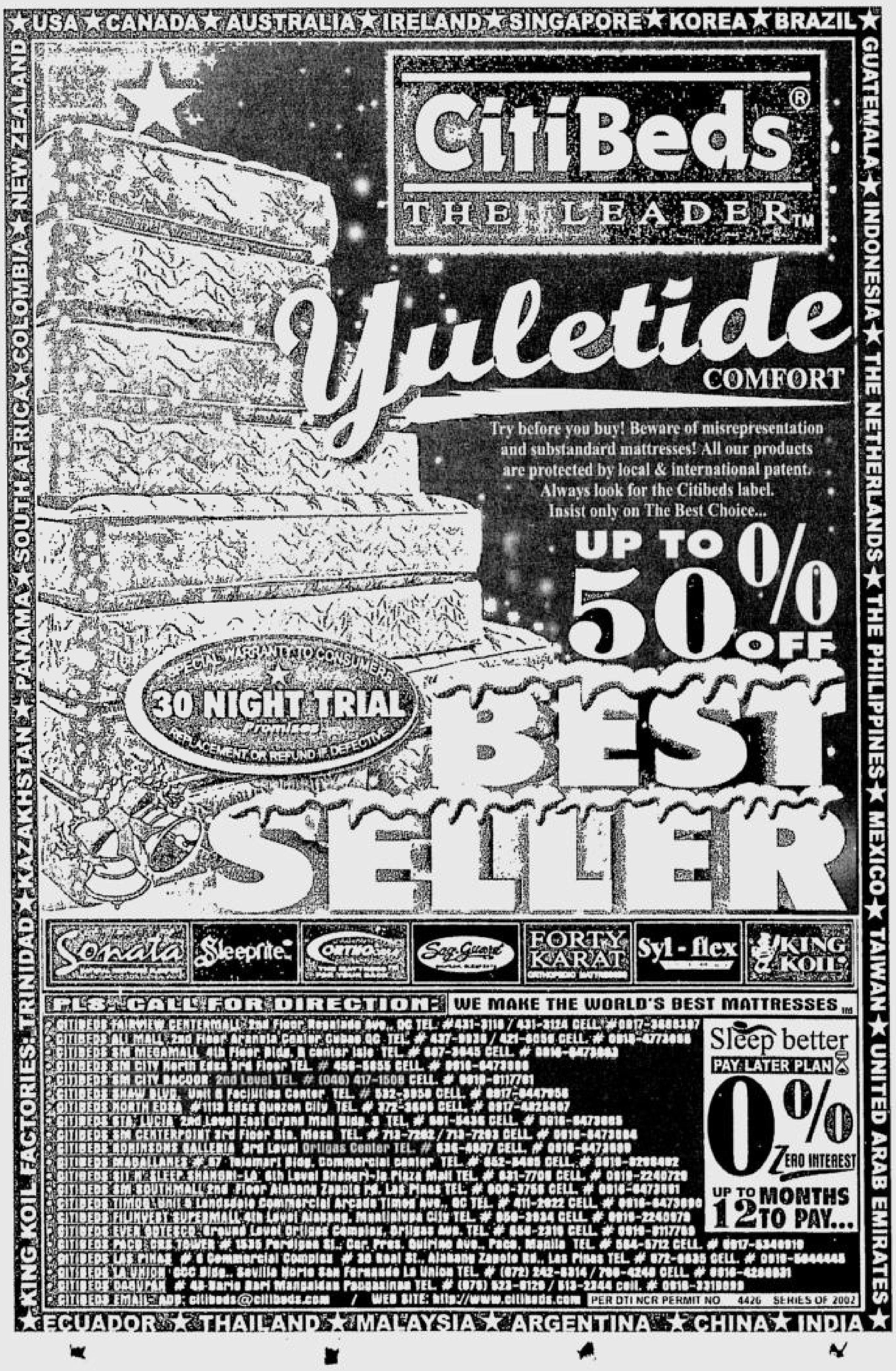

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Budget won't pass, says Drilon

By Cynthia D. Balana

CONGRESS will not be able to pass a new national budget for next year. This means that the government will have to operate under the old budget.

This was according to Senate President Franklin Drilon who expressed dismay over the slow pace of the House deliberation on the proposed P804-billion budget for 2003, a 20-increase from this year's P784 billion.

"I don't think we can approve the budget, that is almost a certainty. So the 2002 budget will be automatically reenacted under the Constitution," Drilon told a press conference.

Traditionally, the Senate receives the budget from the House of Representatives on the second week of November.

Drilon said the Senate committee in charge of the budget has two weeks to finalize the report on the budget. The budget will undergo two more weeks of floor debate before approving it on first, second and third reading. It will then go to the bicameral conference committee.

Congress will adjourn on Dec. 21 for a three-week Christmas break.

As of yesterday, he said, the House has not started its floor debates as the budget was still in the committee level.

Drilon blamed the executive department for submitting the budget proposal late.

He said the House received the budget only on Aug. 22 instead on the usual June or July, or shortly after the State-of-the-Nation Address of the President.

Not even a special session of Congress which the President may call during the Christmas break will help speed up its passage.

"I do not see how a special session can bring the budget to an approval," Drilon pointed out.

"In the schedule that I have outlined to you, I doubt very much if we can finish the floor debates by the end of our scheduled session on Dec. 23," he added.

New case filed vs Chavit

DETRACTORS of "juetengate" whistleblower, former Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, filed another criminal complaint against him yesterday, this time for not declaring a luxury yacht as part of his personal wealth in 1999.

In a five-page complaint filed with the Ombudsman, the Save Ilocos Sur Alliance led by lawyer Estelita Cordero accused Singson of perjury over his ownership of the $1.29-million MV Escalera.

The complaint cited records presented by the defense counsels of deposed president Joseph Estrada in his plunder trial, which showed that Singson acquired the yacht in Hong Kong in October 1999.

Singson was confronted with the boat's registration and insurance papers during his marathon cross examination by Estrada's court-appointed lawyer Prospero Crescini.

The papers now form part of defense exhibits purportedly meant to undermine the credibility of Singson as a star witness against Estrada.

The defense lawyers maintain that Singson had been "misleading" the court when at one point he claimed he co-owned the yacht with now Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

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ENDING NFA MONOPOLY

Farmers to import rice for the 1st time

FILIPINO farmers are preparing to import rice, dismantling the decades-old state monopoly of buying the staple, agriculture officials said yesterday.

"We are now busy with importation of rice. Twenty thousand tons of rice will be initially imported by farmer's groups for arrival in January 2003," an official at the Philippines' state-agency National Food Authority said.

"This will be the first time that farmers are allowed to import rice," he added.

The Philippines is one of Asia's largest rice buyers, importing 1.14 million tons in 2002. It usually buys from Thailand, Vietnam and India.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had previously announced the government was going to allow the private sector to import rice, dismantling the monopoly of NFA, the only state agency allowed to import rice since 1983.

NFA had bought rice over the years only through government-to-government deals.

Maximum

Almost 500 farmers' group throughout the country have applied to import rice, NFA officials said adding that each group's maximum allocation is 200 tons.

The rice would be limited to only special rice varieties of glutinous, premium rice of five percent broken grade and fancy rice (fragrant), officials said.

"The government will not look for the suppliers for them, they will import rice on their own. We are giving them a free hand," said one NFA official.

"However, they will still need to apply to NFA, and we will give them allocations and once the allocation has been finalized, PITC (Philippine International Trading Corp) will open letters of credit for them," he added.

The government would step in only if the farmers' groups and the private sector did not want to import rice, NFA officials said.

The Philippines has completed importing rice for the year, officials said.

"We have just completed importing rice for 2002 with the last 13,000-ton vessel from Thailand just arrived in Subic on Wednesday," said one NFA official.

It was unclear how much rice would be imported next year after the government estimated the 2002 crop would be a record.

The government said on Tuesday it estimated the 2002 paddy rice output would reach a record 13.11 million tons, up 1.2 percent or about 160,000 tons from last year because of a good fourth quarter harvest.

President Macapagal, during a visit to Vietnam on Wednesday, cited a comment by Vietnamese Prime Minister Phan Van Khai that the two-way trade value should reach $600 million a year. *Reuters*

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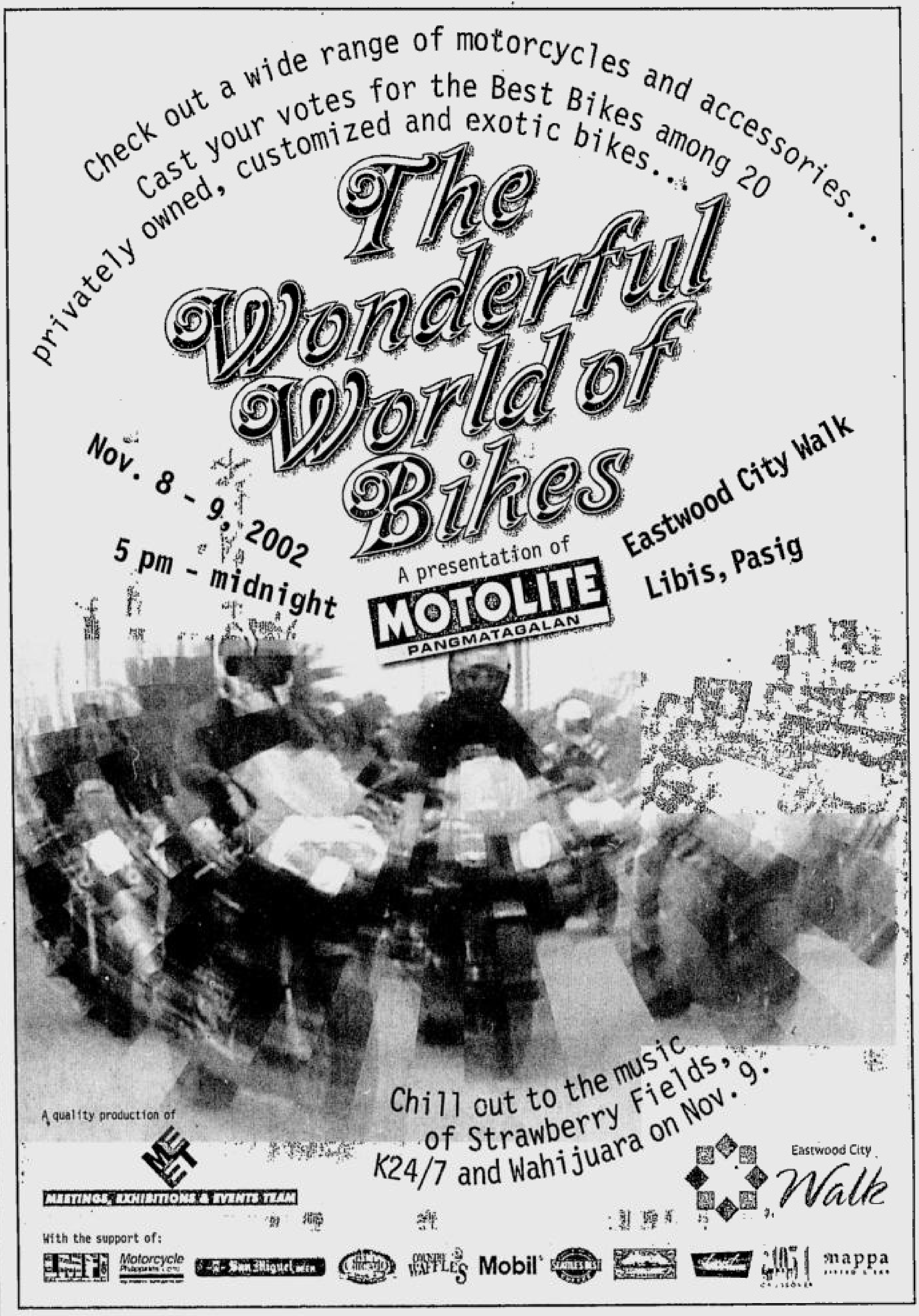
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Spaniard asks Gloria to intervene

By Blanche S. Rivera

JAILED Spanish lawyer Ramon Collado yesterday asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to intervene in his cases in the Bureau of Immigration.

Collado, who had earlier accused the President's men of conniving to order his arrest, said in a statement that his detention at the BI jail in Bicutan "could lead to an international embarrassment for the Macapagal administration."

He said the Philippines, through the Philippine Leisure and Retirement Authority (PLRA), has been trying to market the country as a "beautiful and peaceful place" for foreign retirees to spend their days, attracting around 6,000 retirees like him to live here.

He said he never imagined that his home in the Philippines would be the cramped Immigration jail for undocumented aliens after he exposed the operations of government officials who were trying to cheat foreign retirees of their funds.

Collado has sent letters to Malacañang detailing his case against the PLRA, and appealing to the President to compel the BI to conduct speedy hearings so he can defend himself and answer all the charges filed by the PLRA.

Immigration prosecutor Antonio Carolino said that the deportation proceedings should be done in a month or two, while the BI hears additional complaint of undesirability against Collado.

"The cases are moving," Carolino said.

Collado insisted that his arrest was due to his exposé on the PLRA's unscrupulous activities that prejudiced around P60 million of the retirees' fund.

Collado and the Philippine Retirees Authority Members Association had also claimed that the foundation had lost around P16 million in deposits in the new bank acquired by the President's publicist Dante Ang.

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Saudi assures RP of oil supply

SAUDI Aramco, the largest state-owned oil producer in the Gulf, has assured the Philippines it will have a continuous supply of oil should the United States attack Iraq.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said yesterday he personally received this assurance from Aramco president Abdallah S. Jumah during his visit to Saudi Arabia recently.

Drilon said that Jumah allowed him to tour Aramco's facilities that he could see for himself the company's ability to increase oil output within 24 hours.

He quoted Jumah as saying that the seven million barrels of crude oil that Aramco was producing a day could easily be increased to 10 million barrels in case a full-blown war erupted in the Middle East.

The US has accused Iraq of keeping weapons of mass destruction and threatened an attack if the United Nations failed to take tough moves to disarm the state.

According to Drilon, even the 900,000 Filipino workers in Iraq were not worried about a possible interruption in oil supply to the Philippines or the prospect of getting reduced pay from Saudi companies as earlier reported.

He said workers were more concerned about the possibility of the proposed absentee voting measure not being passed by the end of the year and the dwindling funds of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

Drilon said representatives of workers in Saudi Arabia asked him to speed up the Senate investigation of the reported misuse of Owwa funds, particularly the report that P200 million was missing from the funds.

He said that at least six resolutions had been filed before the Senate committee on labor directing an inquiry into Owwa funds.

Labor Secretary Sto. Tomas has alleged that in 2001, Owwa spent P492,991 million in salaries, benefits, operational costs and other financial transactions but spent only P143,596 million for workers' benefits.

Cynthia D. Balana

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Nat'l Museum rapped over useless security

From page A1

bequeathed the Sto. Niño to the National Museum.

But Laya, also a former chair of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, said the loss would further discourage people from donating or lending artifacts to the National Museum.

The theft could only backfire on museum officials. "It's their reputation that is at stake here," Laya told the INQUIRER. "I cried when I was told about the loss," he said. "It's a nice piece. I can only keep my fingers crossed and hope that museum officials would recover it soon."

Other thefts

Weeks before the sleeping Sto. Niño was stolen, the museum had lost precious porcelain ware in its warehouse, Laya said.

Also, the museum has yet to recover "The Offering," a popular painting by National Artist Fernando Amorsolo stolen several years ago.

But Alvina said the National Museum was not the only museum to fall prey to robbers.

She said the Laoag museum and the San Agustin Church were recent victims too.

In the case of the Sto. Niño, Alvina said its case at the museum's main gallery was forcibly opened.

"This case has been reported to the police and our own committee is investigating," Alvina added.

Last Tuesday, museum curator Nick Legaspi admitted that the museum found it hard to secure its works of art because of lack of funds.

Legaspi on Wednesday appealed to art collectors to surrender the stolen artifact should it be sold to them.

"It's really hard to recover stolen artifacts, that's why we're asking the support of art patrons," he said. "Please help us."

Legaspi had earlier said the National Museum relies heavily on art donors for its exhibits.

"We have very little money to buy works especially those done by the masters," he said during a forum last Tuesday.

According to Marinduque Rep. Edmund Reyes Jr., the museum's annual budget is only around P1 million.

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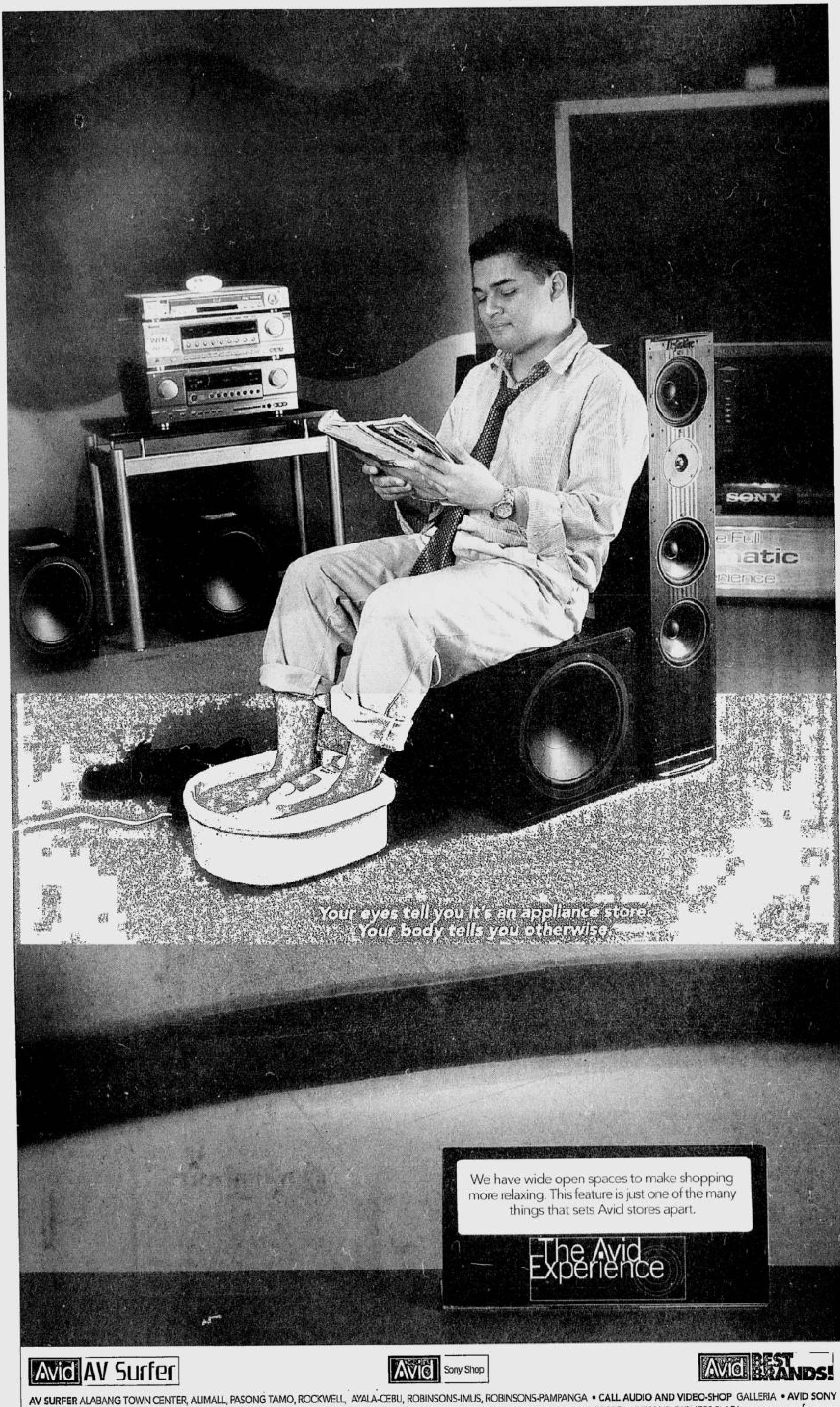

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Dogs guard house of God

From page A1

Around 15 policemen bearing high-powered firearms guarded the church as Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin led the celebration of the mid-morning Mass in memory of the departed bishops, priests and other religious of the archdiocese, including Bishop Leoncio Lat who died of cancer Wednesday.

Parishioners were initially annoyed at the less than spiritual goings-on. Security was so tight that reporters were barred from getting near Sin and the 40 other top Church officials attending the Mass.

But Senior Insp. Cesar Victorino of the Western Police District's Gandara station explained that they simply wanted to make sure that nothing untoward would occur.

Victorino said it was the barangay officials in the area, and not Church officials, who sought the tight security measures. He also noted the "cluster of banks and jewelry shops along Quintin Paredes Street."

Earlier, Manila Auxiliary Bishop Socrates Villegas said that despite the bomb attacks and bomb scares in the country, Church officials had not requested police security in places of worship because they had trust in the Catholic faithful and God's protection.

But PO1 Ronald Medina of the WPD yesterday pointed out that high police visibility, including K-9s, was needed to thwart any terrorist attack on the Church.

"We are living in difficult times and we are just taking the necessary precautions," he said. "We usually put up such security measures in situations like this. We don't want to take risks."

Medina also said that in order not to unduly alarm churchgoers, "we are only doing selective frisking of suspicious-looking characters."

'Askal'

Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada (Negros Occidental, 5th district) thinks that given the proper training, the native *askal* (literally "asong kalye") can perform bomb- and drug-sniffing chores as well as foreign breeds.

Lozada, chair of the House committee on foreign relations, suggested that security officials try the *askal* in the wake of allegations of overpricing by the Philippine National Police in its planned purchase of some 100 K-9s for use in the government's antiterrorism campaign.

He called on the PNP to reconsider its plan to buy the K-9s at P20-80 million, or from P200,000 to P800,000 per dog.

In fact, Lozada said, the Office of the Ombudsman should start investigating the Philippine Coast Guard for buying eight bomb-sniffing dogs at an "overpriced" amount of P800,000 each, for a total of P6.5 million.

He said the ability of native dogs should instead be harnessed because he did not believe that only imported dogs were qualified to sniff bombs or drugs.

"They may look different but native dogs are as receptive, if not even better than, the foreign breeds," he said, adding that native dogs were easier to maintain.

Lozada also said dog trainers in the military and police should try to breed native dogs with foreign ones, like what was being done with fighting cocks.

"We can produce a breed that may be more suitable to Philippine conditions," he said, and cited reports that dog trainers and breeders were using foreign breeds like the Belgian Malinois or the German or Dutch Shepherd because these could be sold at higher prices.

Brisk business

The Coast Guard acquired the dogs in April from Churchill Gomez's Zemog K-9 Training Center, where it also undertook a nine-month dog-training program.

Gomez, 43, a private K-9 trainer, has been enjoying tremendous popularity since the start of the bomb attacks in Metro Manila and certain parts of Mindanao. He is as in demand now as a dance instructor was at the height of the ballroom-dancing craze.

"K-9s are enjoying brisk sales nowadays because they are the first line of defense against bombers. It's much safer to get a dog, rather than a person, to sanitize an area," he told the INQUIRER.

Gomez said that apart from the military and police, security agencies, shopping mall owners and even school administrators had been inquiring about using bomb-sniffing dogs to thwart terrorist attacks.

He said the Labrador and Malinois breeds worked best in Philippine conditions.

But he warned against buying only K-9s, especially from "profit-driven" training centers.

"It doesn't work that way," he said. "Having a trained dog is not enough. You also need a trained handler, an evaluator, an instructor, and many other requirements."

Gomez's center in Caloocan City, the only such center in the country accredited by the PNP, offers a P6.6-million training package consisting of four trained dogs, four semi-trained dogs and six "trainable" ones.

The package also includes a "guaranteed" breeding program for 20 more puppies that can later be trained as K-9s.

Gomez said his center—an offshoot of the Zemog Dog School that his father Frankie Gomez Sr. established in the 1950s—had also been providing free dog training for and lending canines to the PNP Maritime Group.

Soon, Gomez said, his center would train dogs for search-and-rescue, enemy-tracking and armed-confrontation operations for the police or military. *With reports from Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau; Christian V. Esguerra in Manila*

Right-hand-drive cabs to ply Metro on natural gas

By Gerald G. Lacuarta

SIX Malaysian-made taxi vans running on natural gas coming from the Malampaya oil fields will be pilot-tested in Metro Manila to demonstrate the use of alternative cleaner fuels for public transport.

But here's the catch: the cabs are right-hand-drive vehicles banned in the country for safety reasons. That is why the units had to secure exemptions from the ban from the Department of Transportation and Communications.

The six Enviro 2000 units shall be field-tested over a period of six months, according to Thelmo Cunanan, chair of the Philippine National Oil Co. (PNOC) in the launching of the Clean Air Month of November at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources yesterday.

Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez drove one of the six units around the DENR building after being briefed by Cunanan of the performance and roadworthiness of the natural gas vehicles (NGVs) custom-built by Petronas NGV Sdn Bhd, Malaysia's national petroleum company.

The PNOC-Exploration Corp., a subsidiary of the PNOC, will provide the fuel, which will come from the Compressed Natural Gas Refuelling Station in Echague, Isabela.

Cunanan said the Enviro 2000, which costs P1.4 million, produces less harmful air pollutants, hence contributes to the attainment of a cleaner environment.

Report blames lung ailments on pollution

AIR pollution from vehicle exhaust, power plant emissions, burning of solid waste and construction and other related activities account for over 60 percent of respiratory ailments, according to an environmental monitoring group.

The Population Reference Bureau (PRB), in a report titled "Children's Environmental Health: Risks and Remedies," said outdoor pollutants include sulfur dioxide, ozone, nitrogen oxide, carbon monoxide and volatile organic compounds.

PRB reported that children in cities with populations greater than 10 million are exposed to levels of air pollution two to eight times higher than the level World Health Organization considers acceptable.

PRB, founded in 1929, disseminates the latest analysis and scientific information on the causes and consequences of critical population, health and environment linkages, and on the ways that these linkages can be addressed.

In a related report, the Medical Observer, a local monthly publication for doctors and other health professionals, said Metro Manila is soaked in a deadly cocktail of air pollutants—carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, mercury, and particulate matter 10. These chemicals are by-products of fossil-fuels, especially coal, during combustion.

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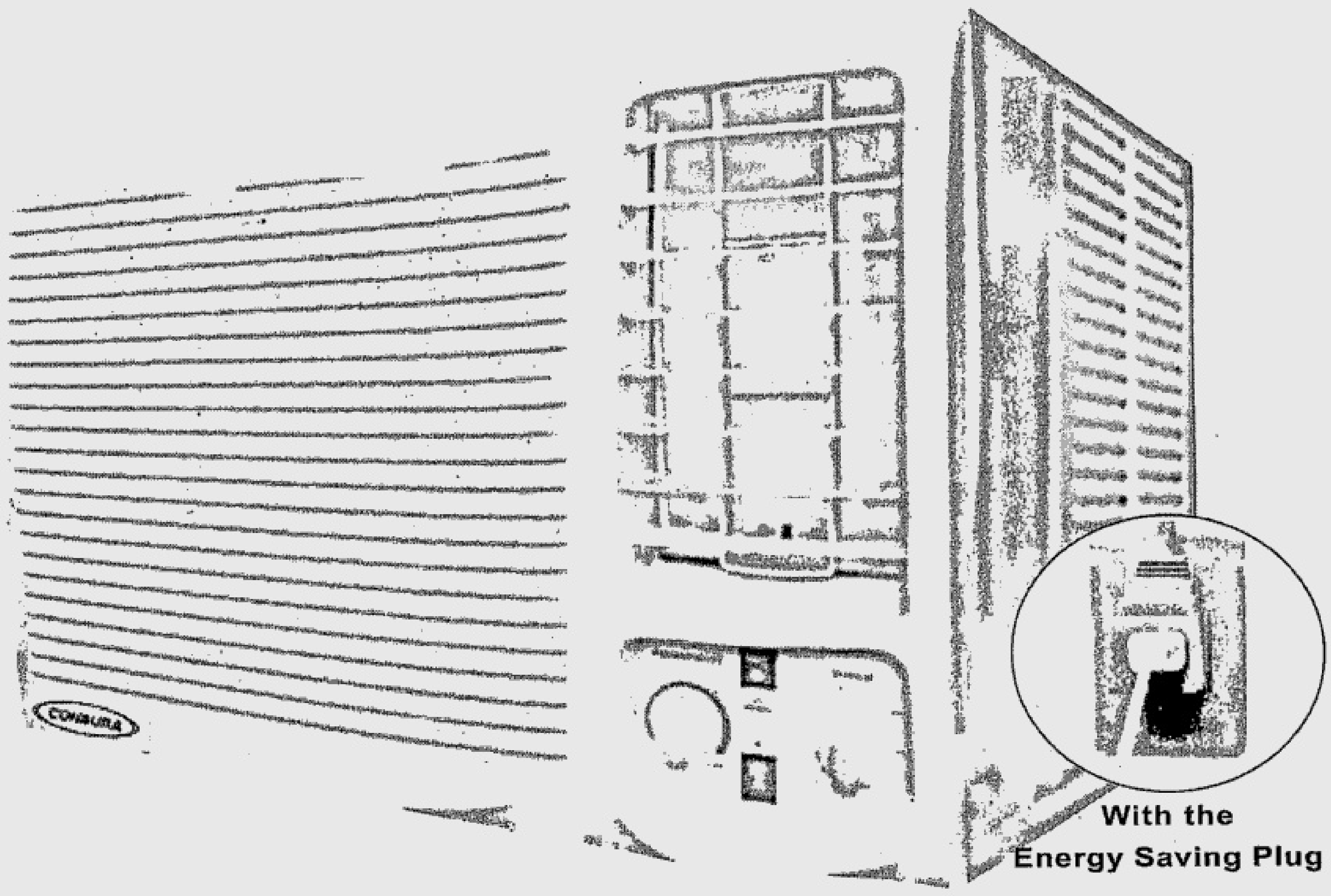

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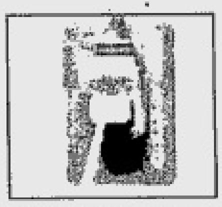

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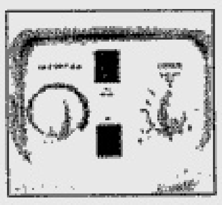

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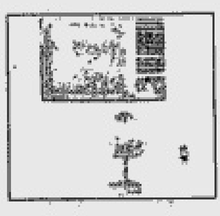

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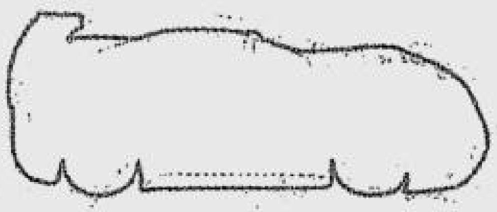

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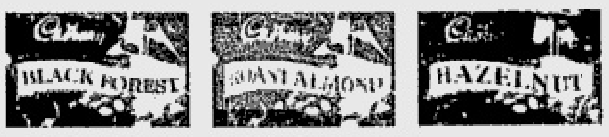
Sugar Free Gum



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OPINION

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Unnecessary warning

EDITORIAL

AT THE SUMMIT meeting of the leaders of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Phnom Penh earlier this week, terrorism and tourism were almost always mentioned in the same breath. Concerned over the fall in tourist arrivals, the Asean leaders decried the efforts of the United States and many other Western countries to discourage their nationals from visiting the region on account of terrorist threats. There was "no established evidence to substantiate rumors of possible terrorist attacks," they said, and yet Western governments have been issuing negative travel advisories to their citizens, helping the terrorists achieve their objectives. As a result, President Macapagal-Arroyo said, tourism was declining at a time when "Asean countries are more than ever working together to protect our tourist destinations from terrorist attacks."

It now appears that Ms Macapagal was wrong—at least partially and rather happily so. According to the Bureau of Immigration, more foreigners have been coming to the country during the first 10 months of the year than last year. From January to October, the bureau counted 1,578,198 foreign arrivals compared with 1,512,145 the previous year, a modest increase of 4.36 percent. Interestingly the number of foreign visitors shot up to 132,702 in October this year, compared to only 97,081 during the same month last year. And the figures are not even all in yet, according to Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon. The numbers for this year include only those who arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, so there should be a little bit more when the reports of arrivals come in from the country's three other international airports in Laoag, Cebu and Davao.

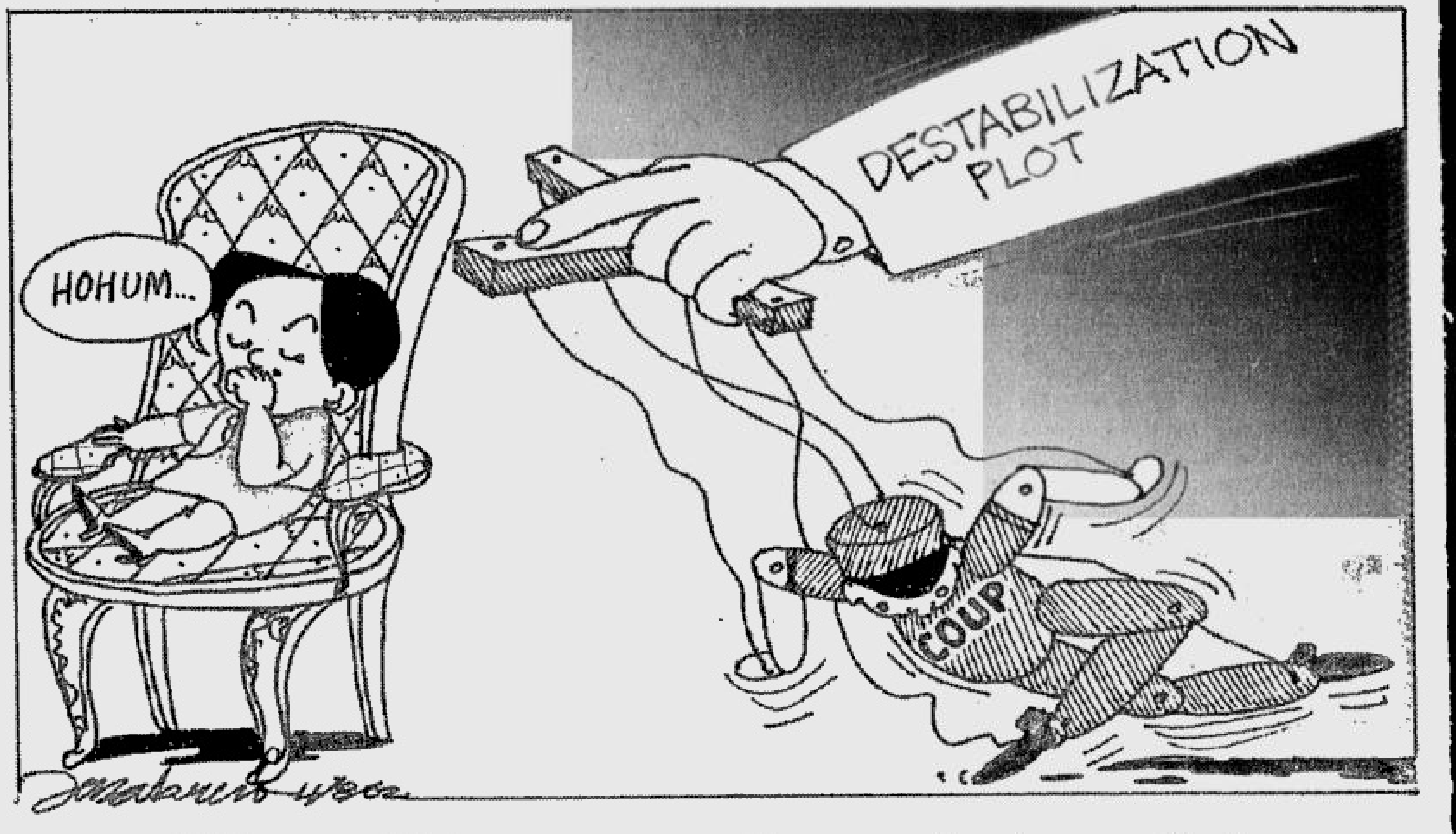
How was the country able to buck the region-wide slump in visitor arrivals that everyone in the tourism industry has been complaining about? Ever the cheerleader, Gordon said the increase showed the "resiliency" of the country's tourism industry in the face of terrorism. He said the Philippines continued to be "one of the safest tourist destinations in the world."

Gordon must be joking or he is talking about a different country. In October alone, 20 people were killed in nine bombing incidents that occurred in places as varied as Zamboanga City and Kidapawan, both in Mindanao, Pampanga, La Union and Metro Manila. Going back a few months, scores of Filipinos and foreigners have been abducted from just about anywhere, including the pricey Dos Palmas resort in Palawan. Before that kidnapping crisis was over, two Americans had been killed—one by beheading at the hands of his Abu Sayyaf abductors and the other in the crossfire during the rescue of the remaining hostages. In the last few weeks, all the police and military could talk about was the possibility of more terrorist attacks, especially in crowded places, and the local cells of international terrorist organizations like al-Qaida and Jemaah Islamiah.

Filipinos, to their credit, may not have allowed themselves to be paralyzed by fear in the face of all this violence. But to foreigners such incidents hardly make the country an attractive destination, unless of course they are themselves up to no good, like the few al-Qaida operatives who have been caught here.

Gordon has noted that despite the negative advisories, Japanese, Korean and Chinese tourists continue to visit the Philippines. He and other tourism officials should hasten to find out why. Unless the immigration data are wrong or these Asian tourists have a fascination for danger, it looks curious that they would be coming in greater numbers to our neck of the woods now. Their reasons could very well be the key to the survival, if not the progress of the industry.

In the meantime, it's futile to try to persuade the United States and other Western governments to take back their advisories advising their citizens against making trips to the Philippines at this time. US State Department spokesman Richard Boucher has explained that his government has the responsibility to warn Americans about potential dangers they might face when they come here. Urging caution is the least any government should do when it perceives danger to its citizens. And when the Armed Forces Chief of Staff, Gen. Benjamin Defensor, describes the terrorist threat in our part of the world as "at a heightened stage" and the government succeeds in having 10,000 communist guerrillas of the New People's Army classified as a terrorist organization, the issuance of a travel advisory by any foreign government becomes unnecessary.



What will happen to Prama's deposits?

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

(Continued from yesterday)

WHAT will happen to the deposits of the Prama Foundation if its president, lawyer Ramon Collado, is deported? Gone, all P44,331,573 of it.

Who would go after the banks to have them refunded? The Prama Foundation is almost nothing without Collado. In fact, many of the foreign retirees, according to propaganda from the Philippine Leisure and Retirement Authority (PLRA), do not like him and the Prama Foundation because they do not want to pay the P2,000 yearly membership dues. Deport Collado and it is as if you also deported the whole Prama.

So who would benefit from that? The banks who would be left with the deposits belonging to the Prama Foundation. (The individual deposits of retirees are in their names.) And the PLRA, which would hog the whole one percent management fee the banks are paying for the hundreds of millions of retirees' deposits. Half of that management fee should go to the Prama Foundation. With Collado and Prama gone, the PLRA would double its yearly management fee (the polite term for commission) from P300 million to P600 million.

Why, what is happening to the Prama Foundation's bank deposits? According to the complaint filed by Collado with the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the National Bureau of Investigation, one of the banks transferred amounts from Prama's four separate dollar and peso savings and current deposits to the account of Seed Capital, which is the majority owner of the bank. All without the authorization of Prama and without documentation, according to the complaint.

When the complaint was exposed by media, the bank and its chair, Dante Ang, President Macapagal-Arroyo's "personal publicist," ran full-page advertisements in the newspapers declaring that it was Prama's finance officer, Rica P. Mipana, "who wrote Bankwise on July 17, 2002, asking the bank to credit his deposit in favor of Seed Capital. Another letter on Aug. 12, 2002, again signed by Mipana was sent to the bank asking that a total of P2 million be withdrawn from his investment through Seed Capital."

The two letters were published in the advertisement. But the types were cunningly made so small that nobody could read, or would bother to read them.

Why? Because the letters said exactly the opposite of what Ang claimed in the advertisement. Ang claimed the letters asked the bank to "credit the deposit in favor of Seed Capital." What the letters said was to terminate the Prama placements in Seed Capital and credit them to three other savings accounts:

"Subject: Termination of Placements in Dollar-Peso Seed Capital

"This refers to our US Dollar Placements which was booked for one year (Jan. 18, 2001) under Seed Capital. Kindly credit the amount of Two Hundred Eighty Thousand Dollars (US$280,000) to our Dollar Account No. 40-0001-00014-8 including interest for the month of July 2002.

"Furthermore, please credit our Peso Deposits under Seed Capital, including accrued interest earned which was booked on May 25, 2001 to the following acounts:

"Prama S/A-11-004-001847-2
—Php2,770,844.67 (two accounts)
"Civil Society S/A (open) 1,207,077.13"

It is clear from the above that the depositor wanted its placements in Seed Capital terminated and transferred to the other separate accounts.

That was also what Mipana said in a recent interview in Channel 2's "Dong Puno Nightly." She added that despite her letter terminating the placements with Seed Capital, the bank "continued to debit the Prama Foundation's accounts and transfer the amounts to Seed Capital without the depositor's knowledge and consent."

She said that Prama's placements with Seed Capital through Bankwise was good for only one year, from Jan. 18, 2001 to Feb. 13, 2002. There was never any extension or rollover arrangement agreed upon, she added.

She clarified that Seed Capital did not invite Collado as an investor but it was Bankwise which convinced him to make placements with Seed Capital.

"Neither Mr. Collado nor the Prama Foundation were ever issued stock certificates by Seed Capital but were simply given official receipts by Bankwise," she added. "What made matters worse was that other Prama Foundation accounts not included in the placements with Seed Capital were also arbitrarily debited and the amounts credited to Seed Capital without the depositor's consent. Adding insult to injury, the bank would give the Prama Foundation cash advances with interest whenever Prama would try to withdraw money from its own accounts." In other words, Prama was being charged interest for its own money.

After the above was written and sent to the INQUIRER, Dante Ang called to say that he has ordered Bankwise to return to Prama all the money withdrawn from the Prama Foundation, Civil Society and Collado deposits, and transferred to the Seed Capital account. Immediately, Ang said. He takes personal responsibility for the refund, the presidential publicist repeated.

* * *

KAPIHAN NOTES: The different sides will be able to clarify things further when they air their respective sides at the Kapihan sa Manila forum this Monday. Invited are Dante Ang, Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo, Felisberto Verano Jr., lawyer for Collado, and Ms Rica Mipana, Prama's finance officer.

Cautionary tales

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

COMPLETELY serendipitously, I discovered that one of the books I had picked up and one of the CDs I was listening to lately had something thing in common. The book is "Spartacus," by Howard Fast, upon which Stanley Kubrick's award-winning movie was based. And the CD is "The Glory of Gerswhin," featuring contemporary interpretations of Gershwin by Sting, Elton John, George Martin ("the fifth Beatle"), et al., and the incomparable Larry Adler on harmonica. The album, produced five or so years ago, is in fact a tribute to Adler on his 80th birthday.

What is common between them is that both Fast and Adler were victims of McCarthyism.

Fast wrote "Spartacus" in prison. And the reason he landed there was that he refused to rat on his friends, as many artists who wanted to save their hide, quite apart from their career, did at the time. Fast refused to turn over to the House Committee on Un-American the names of the members of the Joint Antifascist Refugee Committee. The committee was formed in the days of Gen. Francisco Franco's rise to despotic rule in Spain. Refugees were pouring into France to escape Franco's tyranny, and a group of American antifascists found the money to buy a convent in Toulouse and turn it into a refugee center. The Quakers Relief agreed to run it.

That was considered un-American by the McCarthy committee, which became all powerful after the War and which mounted an anti-communist witch-hunt of this nature and scale. "It was a bad time," Fast wrote, "the country was as close to a police state as it had ever been." His "non-cooperation" fetched him a jail term for contempt. Indeed, more than a jail term, continuing harassment as a free-thinker.

He wrote "Spartacus" in prison but could not get anyone to publish it. J. Edgar Hoover, the FBI head who "took on the role of petty dictator," wrote to book companies forbidding its publication. George Hecht, head of the Doubleday chain of books, walked out of the room in disgust after his editorial board agreed to obey Hoover. He suggested to Fast that he publish the book himself, and said that if he did he would immediately make out an order for 600 copies. Fast did, and to his surprise, it sold 40,000 copies in hardcover and millions more in the next few years.

Ten years later, Kirk Douglas persuaded Universal Studios to turn it into a movie. It became a huge commercial and critical success at the time, vindicating Fast and all he stood for. America had awakened at last.

The book's theme of Spartacus fighting for freedom amid almost impossible odds had a contemporary ring to it. Fast's own dedication reads: "This book is for my daughter, Rachel, and for my son, Jonathan. It is the story of brave men and women who lived long ago, and whose names have never been forgotten. The heroes of this story cherished freedom and human dignity, and lived nobly and well. I wrote it so that those who read it, my children and others, may take strength for our own troubled future and that they may struggle against oppression and wrong—so that the dream of Spartacus may come to be in our own time."

Adler did not go to prison, he went into exile in Britain. He never went back to the country of his birth until late in life, specifically on his 80th birthday, when he performed to rousing applause. The applause wasn't just in admiration of his artistry.

Like most of the liberals of the time, Adler was summoned to appear before the Committee on Un-American Activities. He refused. In his own words: "The only way to get out of that blacklist was to go before the Committee and shop your friends. There was no way I was going to do that. I'd been in trouble before: at our shows during the War, they always tried to segregate the audiences, keeping the white and black soldiers apart. I told them I wouldn't appear unless they were mixed. This hadn't gone unnoticed, I think."

In 1949, Adler left for England, but the harassment didn't end either. His soundtrack for the movie, "Genevieve," was nominated for an Oscar six years later, but his name could not be read out at the awards. His strong opposition to the Vietnam War in the '60s sealed his fate. "I lost respect for a government that could permit such things to happen to its citizens," he said later, "and I'm afraid I didn't regain it."

Fast and Adler were but two of the long list of people who were persecuted during the McCarthy period, a long dark period in American history. And whose careers were nipped at the flush of genius. Others included such greats as Charlie Chaplin, who like Adler lived the rest of his life in England, Zero Mostel, then the toast of the stage, and the writer, Lilian Hellman. The movie, "The Front," which is one of the rare times Woody Allen does not indulge in witticism—he did not write it, he merely appeared in it—reveals the depth of the tragedy of that time.

(With our penchant for copying everything America does, good and bad, we of course also launched our own version of McCarthyism with the Senate Committee on Un-Filipino Activities. I don't know that it ruined many careers, I do know that people like Blas Ople were summoned to appear there.)

These are good cautionary tales, reminding us that truly the price of freedom is eternal vigilance. That is something America itself has not always shown faithfully, and if America can slip there so epically, so can the rest of the world. It's enough in any case to make you wonder what George Bush really means by "defending our way of life" with the silencing of critics not just in America but elsewhere. It is important not just to ask what you are defending the world from.

It is just as important to ask what you are defending the world for.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

What does the retrieval of Luna's 'obra' truly mean?

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE RETURN of Juan Luna's "Parisian Life" from the auction block in Hong Kong, following last-minute intervention by the GSIS, delivered a shock therapy that made Filipinos aware of the hemorrhage of national cultural treasures finding their way into foreign museums and private art collectors.

It is widely known in Philippine cultural circles that we have lost an incalculable number of our artifacts through the porous regulations that are supposed to control the exit of these treasures. "Parisian Life" escaped this fate after the GSIS topped the auction by Christie's in Hong Kong two weeks ago, with a bid for P46 million.

"Parisian Life" was unveiled at the GSIS Museum the other day, occupying pride of place among its art collections. The unveiling drew a record crowd partly because of the controversy that grew out of the GSIS' intervention and partly because the painting had hardly seen the light of public exhibition. Filipinos associate Juan Luna with his masterpiece "Spoliarium," which won the gold medal of excellence in the 1884 Madrid salon exhibition. The painting proclaimed the artistic genius of the Filipino at a time when Luna's compatriots were engaged in the struggle for national liberation. Symbolically, the medal was won in a competition in the colonial capital in which Spain's own talented sons vied for the honor.

The large audience at the unveiling indicated that the controversy over the acquisition of the painting had tapped a vein of Filipino consciousness and pride over a work of art by one of their most gifted artists in generations.

The GSIS snatched "Parisian Life" from possibly falling into foreign hands with a unanimous decision by its board to what its general manager, Winston Garcia, called an act to "save a piece of (Philippine) history." Ironically, Garcia is far from being an art connoisseur, and the decision to enter a bid appears to have been intuitive. After the INQUIRER published the story of the impending bid that provoked a public controversy, the GSIS board got the sense of urgency that it had to intervene quickly, lest the painting will be lost forever from the national patrimony. If it did not top the bid, it is doubtful if the passing of the painting to private, possibly foreign, hands would have been stopped.

The market value of the painting was not, however, lost on the GSIS. Art masterpieces and cultural objects acquire added value over time. The criticism that the GSIS diverted pension funds away from beneficiaries has no basis in fact. Garcia correctly pointed out the money for the purchase came from investment funds. The painting is not merely a monetary investment. It is an investment in history and in the cultural reawakening of the Filipino people to their rich, but rapidly vanishing, cultural heritage.

One congressman said "you can't eat a Luna." True. It is easier to eat grass than to eat canvas. But sheep eat grass, and a nation is not sustained only by what it takes into its stomach. A nation also has a soul and it is this element that is sustained by culture and history.

I think that when the national economy is depressed and when the political system has become a national embarrassment, the Filipino people look at two directions for salvation and redemption of their self-esteem—either they embrace populist but ignorant demagogues who promise the moon or seek solace form inspiring monuments of excellence in the arts. Where politics have failed us, culture, arts and literature have sustained us.

This is what the retrieval of Juan Luna's "Parisian Life" means to the rejuvenation of self-esteem and pride, and the definition of our national identity. We can relate to Luna's or Jose Rizal's works because in them, we see our worth as a people.

Little do we know that when conquering armies vanquish their enemies, the first thing they do after the victory parade in the capital is to loot the national treasures of a fallen nation and ship them to their own land. The armies of Wellington, Napoleon and Hitler did this to conquered territories. Part of the plunder is driven by the doctrine that to the victor belongs the spoils. But the more important motivation is that when the cultural heritage of a nation is hijacked, it loses its soul and its links to its past. This plunder facilitates its demoralization and subjugation.

In this country, we have not experienced the transfer of booty in art treasures flowing out of conquest. What is happening is that we are losing our cultural and historical patrimony from neglect, from leakage and from systematic destruction of historical monuments and landmarks.

The argument that "Parisian Life" has not been classified as a cultural treasure, under Presidential Decree 374 (the Cultural Preservation Act), and therefore can be exported, misses the transcendental issue. Regardless of formal classification, Luna's works are priceless art treasures. It is like Michelangelo's works. Michelangelo's sketches of his awe-inspiring murals are integral parts of his works.

One consequence of the Luna acquisition is that it has prompted the authorities to implement the law requiring classification of cultural treasures to save what still remains in our national domain.

On the meaning of national identity as the foundation of a people's pride, let me refer to a scene in a play by the Polish artist Stanislaw Wyspianski, where the poet is talking to a young girl. This scene concludes Norman Davies' book, "Heart of Europe," and is set in the context of the survival of Poland after it was erased from the map by three partitions in the 18th and 19th centuries.

The scene is, as follows:

"Poet: You can seek Poland throughout the whole wide world, young lady, and you'll never find her.

"Girl: Perhaps searching is a waste of time.

"Poet: Yet there is just one small space—

Now, Jagusia, just place your hand beneath your breast…

Is something beating there?

"Girl: What sort (of) lesson is this? …That's my heart.

"Poet: "Exactly. That's Poland."

Choosing health

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"TO MAKE healthy choices easy, early and exciting, everywhere," this is what the regional (Western Pacific) office of the World Health Organization hopes to achieve with its health promotion initiative.

Health professionals and officials around the region are meeting this week (at the Mandarin Manila) to discuss strategies for promoting what they call healthy settings, healthy lifestyles and healthy populations. And it's a good sign that among the participants are educators, local government officials and media professionals. Which just goes to show, I suppose, that health promotion is not just the responsibility of doctors, nurses, midwives and other health personnel. Other sectors of society, but especially the media, schools and community leaders, need to join in the effort to make people adapt healthy behaviors, and avoid practices harmful to their well-being.

"Health promotion is the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health," says the Ottawa Charter, the declaration of the WHO International Conference on Health Promotion of 1986. "To reach a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, an individual or group must be able to identify and to realize aspirations, to satisfy needs and to change or cope with the environment. Health is therefore seen as a resource for everyday life, not the objective of living. Health is a positive concept emphasizing social and personal resources, as well as physical capacities. Therefore, health promotion is not just the responsibility of the health sector, but goes beyond healthy lifestyle to well-being."

* * *

AMONG THE SPEAKERS last Wednesday was Marikina City Mayor Marides Fernando who presented the city government's health programs, an offshoot, she said, of her administration's decision to make health one of their top priorities. "I would say that everything which we are doing in our city is essentially aligned to our healthy city initiatives. In other words, there's the element of health in all the things that we do as they all lead to the livability of our community," the mayor said.

Marikina boasts an enviable array of health services for its citizens. Among these is "Rescue 161," which guarantees emergency services within five minutes upon call for assistance anywhere in the city. Just by calling 161, Marikina residents are assured of prompt response, the program "conceived out of recognition that the best measurement of efficacy of everything that we do in our community is time."

Marikina folk are also assured that they have a doctor on call from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., known to the community as the "Midnight Doctor." Says the mayor: "It gives our people, particularly the marginalized citizens, the sense of security that a doctor is just a phone call away even during unholy hours at night." During the daytime, free medical services are available at any of the city's 17 government health centers.

To ensure health care for housebound elderly citizens, Marikina also has a program called "Dalaw kay Tatang at Inang (A Visit to Grandpa and Grandma)" with medical and dental personnel paying regular home visits.

* * *

SCHOOLS are viewed as an important venue for health promotion in the city, said Mayor Fernando. Health education has been integrated into the curriculum of public schools, with emphasis on healthy lifestyle, responsible parenthood, responsible pet ownership, the healthy family and preventive health care.

Students in city public schools, said the mayor, are given free notebooks which carry on their back covers "Marikina's Guide to Good Conduct," tips on good citizenship and healthy practices which, she hopes, children will imbibe and then pass on to their parents and other members of the family and community.

The mayor also told the WHO workshop participants about what she calls "Clean and Green Candy," ordinary hard candy which is distributed to Marikina's 60,000 schoolchildren right after the morning flag ceremony. "The children are encouraged to eat the candy but to put the wrappers in their pockets," Mayor Fernando said. "We are trying to teach our people that they should not just scatter litter everywhere and anywhere, but to properly dispose of even the smallest bit of scrap. We hope that the parents will find the candy wrapper in their children's pockets and bags, ask them about it, and thus be educated about proper litter disposal."

Schools as venues for communicating public health messages, students as teachers and community educators—proof that health promotion need not rely on massive and expensive public information campaigns, but need only be rooted in local realities and count on available resources.

* * *

EVEN better news, though, is that Marikina is not the only local government unit that has identified health as a priority and has invested in health promotion as a strategy toward creating a healthy city or town.

There exists a "Healthy City Network," I'm told, which counts among others Marikina, Makati, Tagaytay, San Fernando (La Union), that have set about creating integrated health programs in their localities, and sharing information on best practices among themselves and other local governments.

Perhaps the time will come when voters will base their choice of officials not on how many basketball courts were built or how many funerals a candidate attended, but on how the officials performed, with emphasis on the delivery of basic services, especially health. But this only after we as a people learn to value good health and well-being and come to expect it as a human right.

Wary Iraqi Shi'ites vent anger at America

NEWS ANALYSIS

Samia Nakhoul

KARBALA, Iraq—Caught up in a US-fanned revolt against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein 12 years ago, people in the Shi'ite Muslim shrine city of Karbala have many reasons to be wary. Now they say the United States is their enemy.

Former US President George Bush encouraged Iraqi Shi'ites and Kurds to overthrow Saddam during the 1991 Gulf War, but gave the rebels no support when they found themselves hopelessly outgunned by Baghdad's tanks and attack helicopters.

US and British warplanes have since enforced no-fly zones in the mainly Shi'ite south and the Kurdish north of Iraq with the declared aim of protecting civilians there.

The gesture seems lost on Shi'ites in Karbala, who profess no faith in Washington. For them, US intentions' are written in Palestinian blood and Iraqi suffering from punitive sanctions.

"How can we trust them?" said Nidal al-Ali, in the courtyard of the tomb of the Prophet Mohammad's grandson Hussein, whose killing by rival Muslims is mourned by Shi'ites everywhere to this day.

"If the Americans had any goodness or conscience, they wouldn't accept to see the children of Palestine being killed by the Israelis...This is the best evidence of America's cruelty," she added.

Beneath the shrine's golden domes, women in black chadors with their children and menfolk, many of them pilgrims from remote villages, shared picnics in the courtyard after prayers.

Whatever private feelings the worshippers at Hussein's tomb might have, their anti-US sentiments appeared deeply felt.

"America weakens people and then decides to control them. America is a ferocious animal," said one black-clad woman, Salima Jassem.

"If they like Iraqis, let them lift sanctions." "We're Muslims and we don't like any foreigners to come and invade our country. We have our principles and our traditions. We are one religion and they are infidels," she added.

A strict UN trade embargo imposed for Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait has reduced many Iraqis to penury and ravaged Iraq's once-lauded nutrition, health and education standards. Iraq blames sanctions for nearly 1.5 million civilian deaths.

Shi'ites make up a large proportion of Iraq's 23 million people, who include Sunni Muslims, Kurds and Christians.

The governor of Karbala, a city of 800,000 that is second only to the Iraqi city of Najaf as a seat of Shi'ite religious learning, dismissed any notion that the grievances of traditionally under-privileged Shi'ites could prompt a repeat of the post-Gulf War rebellion.

"We should thank the Americans because they have united the Iraqi people more than ever with their sanctions, continuous aggression and provocations to Muslims," General Latif Hmoud told Reuters in Karbala, 100 km (60 miles) south of Baghdad.

"I say to those betting on rifts between Sunnis and Shi'ites that this is an old song, this is wishful thinking," he said in his office, adorned with posters of Saddam praying in Karbala or set against a backdrop of Jerusalem's al-Aqsa mosque.

"What happened in 1990-91 had special circumstances. At the time we didn't think there would be treason and betrayal," the general, dressed in green military fatigues, said of the uprisings. "Unfortunately, our trust was misplaced." "After 12 years, we've all learned from experience and we are ready to face any situation," he said, blaming the revolt on "infiltrators from outside"—referring to mainly Shi'ite Iran, which fought an eight-year war with Iraq in the 1980s.

Iraqi Shi'ite religious leaders have warned Muslims not to help the United States try to topple Saddam, saying they would be disgraced in this life and punished in the next.

Nidal al-Ali, 32, who had come to worship at the shrine, endorsed the message. "America is not coming here because it loves the people of Iraq. America is coming out of greed, for the Iraqi oil and for the destruction of Iraq," she said.

The pilgrims in Karbala said they were praying for peace, not wondering what the future might hold if US President George W. Bush implements his threat to remove Saddam by force if Iraq fails to scrap its alleged arsenal of banned weapons.

In this holy city, the faithful seek religious solace, talking little of politics and caring less about the outside world as they kneel in silent devotion to venerate Imam Hussein.

Islam, they say, is the ultimate solution for the Shi'ites of Iraq. But they seem resigned to the prospect that their lot may get much worse, in the event of war, before it improves.

"We're faithful and we rely on God to look after us. Bush is a man who likes war," said Sajeda Abdel Nour. "We've been through two wars already, we don't want a third," she said, referring to the Gulf conflict and the war with Iran.

Reuters

GMA gets thumbs u

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—If President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo wer running in the Filipino community in America, especiall Hawaii, she would win hands down.

She must be pleased with the overwhelming outpourin of "*mabuhay*" and "*aloha*" during her brief overnight offici visit in Hawaii, especially in the banquet tendered in he honor with an audience of 1,250, mostly from Hawaii's Fi ipino community, which ranks third in the state's overa population. "*Nahasa na,*" commented an observer after GMA gave her speech, comparing it with her 1998 unofficial visit as Vice President. That time her speech sounded very prepared but wa more like an academic lecture in Economics 101.

This time she was spontaneous and connected very easil with the diverse Filipino-American audience with her e gaging greetings in Tagalog, Pangasinan, Kapampangan, C buano and, of course, Ilocano, the predominant languag group among Hawaii's Filipinos. Her extemporaneo speech was interrupted many times with applause, partic larly the reference to the "absentee voting" bill, which ha passed the Philippine Congress, she reported. This will b the subject of a future commentary along with the dual citizenship bill.

One of the highlights of the evening was President GMA conferring Gov. Benjamin Cayetano the Philippine Legion Honor Medal with the rank of commander. Cayetano, finis ing his second term as governor, is the first governor in th United States of Filipino ancestry. His father was an imm grant from Urdaneta, Pangasinan.

Earlier the President met with CINCPAC officials and was later given a tour of the FilCom Center, the Filipino community's recently completed "pride and joy," costing $14 million, mostly from grants and Filipino contributions. The CINCPAC meeting was private and no releases were made about what transpired.

But the FilCom Center event was some kind of a treat especially for younger Filipino-Americans who have never been to the Philippines. I dismissed my class to enable them to attend the event, but because there was protocol involved, in which everyone meeting with the President had to be registered, only two of my students, both local-born Filipinos, ages 17 and 18, managed to attend.

The boy said he was "excited" to shake the hand of the President and commented on how young she looked! He later asked me how old the President was, and I sort of glared at him for asking such a politically incorrect question.

The girl was even more excited because "I have never met a President of any country before." Both were thrilled by the experience.

I later sought out two prominent Filipino community leaders, Rose Churma and Dean Alegado, about their reactions to the President's visit. These are two very reliable informants and I usually value their insights.

Churma, an architect originally from Baguio City, was assigned the task of giving GMA a personal tour of the Center. "I felt," Churma reflected, that GMA was "genuinely interested in our future plans for the Center, and was impressed with our collective achievement." Churma had served as interim executive director of the Center. "I was able to watch the press conference that was held afterwards," she continued, "and I thought she [GMA] had a grasp of the issues faced by the country—in short she had done her homework for this trip."

Later, Churma got back to me and said there were press releases about GMA's trip to the mainland US indicating that she had "endorsed" certain politicians running for office. If these reports were true, Churma added, "I feel that heads of state, just like visible leaders of non-profit organizations, should not be endorsing political candidates."

This being election year in the United States, many groups in Hawaii and on the mainland maneuvered to use the President's visit to promote their own candidates. The flap in Hawaii involved the use of the President's picture and presidential seal in mailings sent out to the Filipino community by the Republican Party.

Alegado, a professor of Ethnic Studies at the Universit of Hawaii, noted that there was nothing particularly note worthy about the President's visit to folks in the Philip pines. "Its value and significance, in my mind, probably un derscored the growing political clout of the Filipino com munity vis-à-vis the larger community, given the timing o the visit," Alegado recalled. Since the visit occurred a fev days before the midterm elections, practically all the politi cal heavyweights were there, the members of the Suprem Court and even Catholic Bishop Di Lorenzo (who never at tends Filipino events in the first place). Alegado furthe noted that Filipinos overseas now are not as "gullible" a before, that they know more about what is going on bac home because of advances in media technology. He lik wise noted that the huge size of the crowd indicated ge uine interest in Philippine politics as well as in Filipino po itics in Hawaii.

There were speculations all over the place about the 200 presidential elections in the Philippines, although noboc raised that; not even the media. But at this point it's ever body's view that she's in a very good position as far as th overseas Filipinos are concerned.

Belinda A. Aquino is professor of Political Science and Asia Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she is al director of the Center for Philippine Studies.

THEY SAID

Racist excuse

"It's a racist excuse and there's no justification for it."
—*Filipino student activist Kuusela Hilo on the United States' use of non-immigrant airport screeners as scapegoats for 9/11*

Sauce for gander, goose

"What is good for Pimentel is not good for the others. What is sauce for the ganders is not sauce for the goose."
—*Sen. Joker Arroyo on the exchange of words between Sen. Aquilino Pimentel and Sen. Francis Pangilinan*

Passé talk

"Coup talks are very much passé. It's like discussing i Elvis Presley is alive or not."
—*Presidential spokesman Rigoberto Tiglao denying coup talks prompted the President's order to transfer the Marines' headquarters to Mindanao*

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Rina Jimenez-David

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* * *

AMONG THE SPEAKERS last Wednesday was Marikina City Mayor Marides Fernando who presented the city government's health programs, an offshoot, she said, of her administration's decision to make health one of their top priorities. "I would say that everything which we are doing in our city is essentially aligned to our healthy city initiatives. In other words, there's the element of health in all the things that we do as they all lead to the livability of our community," the mayor said.

Marikina boasts an enviable array of health services for its citizens. Among these is "Rescue 161," which guarantees emergency services within five minutes upon call for assistance anywhere in the city. Just by calling 161, Marikina residents are assured of prompt response, the program "conceived out of recognition that the best measurement of efficacy of everything that we do in our community is time."

Marikina folk are also assured that they have a doctor on call from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m., known to the community as the "Midnight Doctor." Says the mayor: "It gives our people, particularly the marginalized citizens, the sense of security that a doctor is just a phone call away even during unholy hours at night." During the daytime, free medical services are available at any of the city's 17 government health centers.

To ensure health care for housebound elderly citizens, Marikina also has a program called "Dalaw kay Tatang at Inang (A Visit to Grandpa and Grandma)" with medical and dental personnel paying regular home visits.

* * *

SCHOOLS are viewed as an important venue for health promotion in the city, said Mayor Fernando. Health education has been integrated into the curriculum of public schools, with emphasis on healthy lifestyle, responsible parenthood, responsible pet ownership, the healthy family and preventive health care.

Students in city public schools, said the mayor, are given free notebooks which carry on their back covers "Marikina's Guide to Good Conduct," tips on good citizenship and healthy practices which, she hopes, children will imbibe and then pass on to their parents and other members of the family and community.

The mayor also told the WHO workshop participants about what she calls "Clean and Green Candy," ordinary hard candy which is distributed to Marikina's 60,000 schoolchildren right after the morning flag ceremony. "The children are encouraged to eat the candy but to put the wrappers in their pockets," Mayor Fernando said. "We are trying to teach our people that they should not just scatter litter everywhere and anywhere, but to properly dispose of even the smallest bit of scrap. We hope that the parents will find the candy wrapper in their children's pockets and bags, ask them about it, and thus be educated about proper litter disposal."

Schools as venues for communicating public health messages, students as teachers and community educators—proof that health promotion need not rely on massive and expensive public information campaigns, but need only be rooted in local realities and count on available resources.

* * *

EVEN better news, though, is that Marikina is not the only local government unit that has identified health as a priority and has invested in health promotion as a strategy toward creating a healthy city or town.

There exists a "Healthy City Network," I'm told, which counts among others Marikina, Makati, Tagaytay, San Fernando (La Union), that have set about creating integrated health programs in their localities, and sharing information on best practices among themselves and other local governments.

Perhaps the time will come when voters will base their choice of officials not on how many basketball courts were built or how many funerals a candidate attended, but on how the officials performed, with emphasis on the delivery of basic services, especially health. But this only after we as a people learn to value good health and well-being and come to expect it as a human right.

Wary Iraqi Shi'ites vent anger at America

NEWS ANALYSIS

Samia Nakhoul

KARBALA, Iraq—Caught up in a US-fanned revolt against Iraqi President Saddam Hussein 12 years ago, people in the Shi'ite Muslim shrine city of Karbala have many reasons to be wary. Now they say the United States is their enemy.

Former US President George Bush encouraged Iraqi Shi'ites and Kurds to overthrow Saddam during the 1991 Gulf War, but gave the rebels no support when they found themselves hopelessly outgunned by Baghdad's tanks and attack helicopters.

US and British warplanes have since enforced no-fly zones in the mainly Shi'ite south and the Kurdish north of Iraq with the declared aim of protecting civilians there.

The gesture seems lost on Shi'ites in Karbala, who profess no faith in Washington. For them, US intentions are written in Palestinian blood and Iraqi suffering from punitive sanctions.

"How can we trust them?" said Nidal al-Ali, in the courtyard of the tomb of the Prophet Mohammad's grandson Hussein, whose killing by rival Muslims is mourned by Shi'ites everywhere to this day.

"If the Americans had any goodness or conscience, they wouldn't accept to see the children of Palestine being killed by the Israelis...This is the best evidence of America's cruelty," she added.

Beneath the shrine's golden domes, women in black chadors with their children and menfolk, many of them pilgrims from remote villages, shared picnics in the courtyard after prayers.

Whatever private feelings the worshippers at Hussein's tomb might have, their anti-US sentiments appeared deeply felt.

"America weakens people and then decides to control them. America is a ferocious animal," said one black-clad woman, Salima Jassem.

"If they like Iraqis, let them lift sanctions." "We're Muslims and we don't like any foreigners to come and invade our country. We have our principles and our traditions. We are one religion and they are infidels," she added.

A strict UN trade embargo imposed for Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait has reduced many Iraqis to penury and ravaged Iraq's once-lauded nutrition, health and education standards. Iraq blames sanctions for nearly 1.5 million civilian deaths.

Shi'ites make up a large proportion of Iraq's 23 million people, who include Sunni Muslims, Kurds and Christians.

The governor of Karbala, a city of 800,000 that is second only to the Iraqi city of Najaf as a seat of Shi'ite religious learning, dismissed any notion that the grievances of traditionally under-privileged Shi'ites could prompt a repeat of the post-Gulf War rebellion.

"We should thank the Americans because they have united the Iraqi people more than ever with their sanctions, continuous aggression and provocations to Muslims," General Latif Hmoud told Reuters in Karbala, 100 km (60 miles) south of Baghdad.

"I say to those betting on rifts between Sunnis and Shi'ites that this is an old song, this is wishful thinking," he said in his office, adorned with posters of Saddam praying in Karbala or set against a backdrop of Jerusalem's al-Aqsa mosque.

"What happened in 1990-91 had special circumstances. At the time we didn't think there would be treason and betrayal," the general, dressed in green military fatigues, said of the uprisings. "Unfortunately, our trust was misplaced." "After 12 years, we've all learned from experience and we are ready to face any situation," he said, blaming the revolt on "infiltrators from outside"—referring to mainly Shi'ite Iran, which fought an eight-year war with Iraq in the 1980s.

Iraqi Shi'ite religious leaders have warned Muslims not to help the United States try to topple Saddam, saying they would be disgraced in this life and punished in the next.

Nidal al-Ali, 32, who had come to worship at the shrine, endorsed the message. "America is not coming here because it loves the people of Iraq. America is coming out of greed, for the Iraqi oil and for the destruction of Iraq," she said.

The pilgrims in Karbala said they were praying for peace, not wondering what the future might hold if US President George W. Bush implements his threat to remove Saddam by force if Iraq fails to scrap its alleged arsenal of banned weapons.

In this holy city, the faithful seek religious solace, talking little of politics and caring less about the outside world as they kneel in silent devotion to venerate Imam Hussein.

Islam, they say, is the ultimate solution for the Shi'ites of Iraq. But they seem resigned to the prospect that their lot may get much worse, in the event of war, before it improves.

"We're faithful and we rely on God to look after us. Bush is a man who likes war," said Sajeda Abdel Nour. "We've been through two wars already, we don't want a third," she said, referring to the Gulf conflict and the war with Iran.

Reuters

GMA gets thumbs up

COMMENTARY

Belinda A. Aquino

HONOLULU—If President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo wer running in the Filipino community in America, especiall Hawaii, she would win hands down.

She must be pleased with the overwhelming outpourin of "*mabuhay*" and "*aloha*" during her brief overnight offici visit in Hawaii, especially in the banquet tendered in he honor with an audience of 1,250, mostly from Hawaii's Fi ipino community, which ranks third in the state's overa population. "*Nahasa na,*" commented an observer after GMA gave her speech, comparing it with her 1998 unofficial visit as Vice President. That time her speech sounded very prepared but wa more like an academic lecture in Economics 101.

This time she was spontaneous and connected very easil with the diverse Filipino-American audience with her en gaging greetings in Tagalog, Pangasinan, Kapampangan, Ce buano and, of course, Ilocano, the predominant languag group among Hawaii's Filipinos. Her extemporaneou speech was interrupted many times with applause, partic larly the reference to the "absentee voting" bill, which ha passed the Philippine Congress, she reported. This will b the subject of a future commentary along with the dual cit zenship bill.

One of the highlights of the evening was President GMA conferring Gov. Benjamin Cayetano the Philippine Legion Honor Medal with the rank of commander. Cayetano, finisl ing his second term as governor, is the first governor in the United States of Filipino ancestry. His father was an immigrant from Urdaneta, Pangasinan.

Earlier the President met with CINCPAC officials and was later given a tour of the FilCom Center, the Filipino community's recently completed "pride and joy," costing $14 million, mostly from grants and Filipino contributions. The CINCPAC meeting was private and no releases were made about what transpired.

But the FilCom Center event was some kind of a treat especially for younger Filipino-Americans who have never been to the Philippines. I dismissed my class to enable them to attend the event, but because there was protocol involved, in which everyone meeting with the President had to be registered, only two of my students, both local-born Filipinos, ages 17 and 18, managed to attend.

The boy said he was "excited" to shake the hand of the President and commented on how young she looked! He later asked me how old the President was, and I sort of glared at him for asking such a politically incorrect question.

The girl was even more excited because "I have never met a President of any country before." Both were thrilled by the experience.

I later sought out two prominent Filipino community leaders, Rose Churma and Dean Alegado, about their reactions to the President's visit. These are two very reliable informants and I usually value their insights.

Churma, an architect originally from Baguio City, was assigned the task of giving GMA a personal tour of the Center. "I felt," Churma reflected, that GMA was "genuinely interested in our future plans for the Center, and was impressed with our collective achievement." Churma had served as interim executive director of the Center. "I was able to watch the press conference that was held afterwards," she continued, "and I thought she [GMA] had a grasp of the issues faced by the country—in short she had done her homework for this trip."

Later, Churma got back to me and said there were press releases about GMA's trip to the mainland US indicating that she had "endorsed" certain politicians running for office. If these reports were true, Churma added, "I feel that heads of state, just like visible leaders of non-profit organizations, should not be endorsing political candidates."

This being election year in the United States, many groups in Hawaii and on the mainland maneuvered to use the President's visit to promote their own candidates. The flap in Hawaii involved the use of the President's picture and presidential seal in mailings sent out to the Filipino community by the Republican Party.

Alegado, a professor of Ethnic Studies at the University of Hawaii, noted that there was nothing particularly noteworthy about the President's visit to folks in the Philippines. "Its value and significance, in my mind, probably underscored the growing political clout of the Filipino community vis-à-vis the larger community, given the timing of the visit," Alegado recalled. Since the visit occurred a few days before the midterm elections, practically all the political heavyweights were there, the members of the Supreme Court and even Catholic Bishop Di Lorenzo (who never attends Filipino events in the first place). Alegado furthe noted that Filipinos overseas now are not as "gullible" a before, that they know more about what is going on bac home because of advances in media technology. He like wise noted that the huge size of the crowd indicated gen uine interest in Philippine politics as well as in Filipino pol itics in Hawaii.

There were speculations all over the place about the 200 presidential elections in the Philippines, although nobod raised that, not even the media. But at this point it's every body's view that she's in a very good position as far as th overseas Filipinos are concerned.

Belinda A. Aquino is professor of Political Science and Asia Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa where she is al director of the Center for Philippine Studies.

THEY SAID

Racist excuse

"It's a racist excuse and there's no justification for it."
—Filipino student activist Kuusela Hilo on the United States' use of non-immigrant airport screeners as scapegoats for 9/11

Sauce for gander, goose

"What is good for Pimentel is not good for the others. What is sauce for the ganders is not sauce for the goose."
—Sen. Joker Arroyo on the exchange of words between Sen. Aquilino Pimentel and Sen. Francis Pangilinan

Passé talk

"Coup talks are very much passé. It's like discussing if Elvis Presley is alive or not."
—Presidential spokesman Rigoberto Tiglao denying coup talks prompted the President's order to transfer the Marines' headquarters to Mindanao

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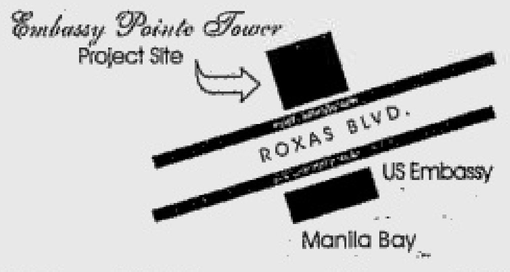

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LETTERS PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

An unacceptable amnesty

THERE is nothing wrong with the amnesty program mentioned by presidential spokesman Rigoberto Tiglao. He probably means well. What is wrong, completely wrong, is the policy environment.

During the 1950s, the government offered amnesty in an environment of policy reforms. Import and exchange controls were imposed, which nationalists among Filipino businessmen translated into an import substitution strategy of development. Thus, hundreds of factories, including Filoil and Iligan Steel, emerged. There was a promise to reform land tenure, a minimum wage was fixed and a labor-management free collective bargaining system institutionalized. Thus, Huk chieftain Luis Taruc, not knowing that the reforms were really anti-insurgency measures, was lured to surrender in 1954.

In 1974, when the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas entered into a truce with President Marcos, leading to the release of Dr. Jesus Lava from prison, the Marcos regime was busy developing the blueprints of its 11 major industrial projects designed to replicate in the Philippines Park Chung Hee's massive industrialization program in South Korea. Moreover, Marcos was at the time exerting efforts to renegotiate the 1947 RP-US Military Bases Agreement and setting in motion the launching of PD 27 which sought to emancipate the nation's tenants from feudalism.

Today, Tiglao is talking about amnesty as globalization's deadly tentacles tighten their hold on the economy, destroying millions of industries and jobs and imprisoning more than 70 percent of 80 million Filipinos in bottomless poverty and injustice. In the next three years, things are due to get worse as the Asean Free Trade Area, Asean Plus China, the Asia-Pacific Free Trade Area and the free trade covenants under the World Trade Organization become operational.

Surrender and join Tiglao's "mainstream"? That option is for masochists, not for revolutionaries.

—AMADO GAT INCIONG,
Inciong and Associates, Unit 301,
Union Square Condominium,
145 15th Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City

Wasteful spending

INVESTING P50.6 million out of the retirees' pension funds in the Government Service Insurance System on Juan Luna's 110-year-old painting is wasteful spending, pure and simple. (PDI, 10/28/02) In the first place, Luna's *obra maestra* is no longer convertible to cash in case of dire need to offset any deficiency in pension funds to the detriment of millions of GSIS pensioners in the country. Secondly, Luna's painting would just gather dust and cobwebs inside the museum for the next century with nobody gazing at it from the next generation.

In this time of economic crisis, a country with 75 percent of its 80 million population living with hunger as a daily reality, P50.6 million is a lot of money which could have otherwise been put to better use. But the GSIS is foolish to wastefully spend P50.6 million in retirement funds in unproductive investments.

—GODOFREDO O. PETEZA SR.,
J.P. Rizal St., Barangay Camambugan,
Daet, Camarines Norte, 4600

Baseless assessment of NSAT results

IN HIS commentary titled, "People of the Lie" (PDI, 11/1/02) Antonio Calipjo Go, academic supervisor of Marian School of Quezon City, labeled as "fraudulent," "spurious" and "false" the results of the National Secondary Assessment Test (NSAT) for school year 1999-2000 in which the Caraga Regional Science High School in Surigao City was No. 1 in the entire Philippines.

What was his evidence? Nothing, absolutely nothing was mentioned by him. Significantly, he stated that "it has never been denounced." There was no investigation conducted and no evidence presented.

Further contradicting his conclusion, Go revealed that "the vice president of the Federation of Association of Private School Administrators merely shrugged off the dismal performance of their member schools. Saying that 'most of our students simply ignored the tests.' The principal of the Ateneo de Manila High School could not explain why one of the most prestigious schools in the country did not land among the top 20."

Trying to cover up with sarcasm his lack of evidence, Go had the gall to say that "only a fool would have believed that they teach better at the Caraga Regional Science High School in Surigao City than they do at the Ateneo."

It's a pity that Go could not contain his unabashed bias against the Caraga Regional Science High School for being No. 1. If he is worth his salt as an educator, he should know that no school, Ateneo included, can lay claim to a monopoly of talented teachers and students.

Without fear of contradiction, I can say that the teachers of this school are highly qualified and can stand tall side by side with the teachers of any high school in the country that Go may choose.

The students are the cream of the crop in the Caraga region. They are admitted only after rigid screening which includes written examinations administered by officials from Manila. All the students are government scholars. They are not inferior to Manila students.

In all probability, Go has not visited Surigao City. In order to free him from bias and prejudice against the teachers and students of the Caraga Regional Science High School, I am extending an invitation for him to come and see for himself.

—ENRIQUE Y. TANDAN,
Corner Amat and Diez Streets,
8400 Surigao City

An anti-'jueteng' casualty

"AANHIN pa ang damo kapag patay na ang kabayo?"

This is never more true than in the case of my uncle, 62-year-old plumber Pablo Ocampo of 18 A. Mabini Extension, San Pablo City, Laguna. He was a family man with five children, who died on Nov. 2, 2002, clutching an empty promise he believed in.

To support his family's needs, my uncle became a *kabo* or a chief of *jueteng* collectors for the past 15 years to augment his meager income. He said he worked for the late Fred Magbuhos, rumored to be one of Laguna's top *jueteng* financiers and was even arrested by the police more than once for the kind of work he did.

When Interior Secretary Jose Lina embarked on the national and much-publicized campaign to eradicate *jueteng* and other forms of illegal gambling last April 30, he said the livelihood component is one of the four approaches he proposed to finally put a stop to *jueteng* operations in the country. The others are reforming the legal system, effective law enforcement and strong moral conviction in the government.

Citing Lina's promised help, I was even able to convince my uncle that the secretary's efforts were sincere and he even sought my help for the promised assistance from Lina's office.

Heeding Lina's assurances that he would be provided the promised assistance if he turned away from the illegal activity, my uncle was one of the first to respond to the government's call.

Last June 24, my uncle sent a letter to Lina's office for help in acquiring plumbing equipment (a 12-inch pipe wrench and a pipe threader). You see, my uncle was a plumber by profession and wanted his sons to learn the trade so they would not have to spend a night in jail for being arrested for *jueteng* like he did.

In the five months since he sent the letter, my uncle never received a reply from Lina's office regarding the matter. Now he is dead.

I hope this unfortunate episode would not be repeated in others who were not as fortunate as my uncle, who merely believed what Lina said.

—PAUL ANDREW O. ATIENZA,
reporter, Today, 55 Paseo de Roxas,
Urdaneta Village, Makati City

For more accurate Nipongo

I AM convinced by now that your editors do really strive for maximum accuracy both in form and in substance of everything the paper publishes. Thus, I would assume that if the High Blood contribution on Nov. 6 contained some inaccuracies, it's because the editors themselves may not know that they were.

The inaccuracies were the translations provided by Ricardo D. Dizon on Nipongo phrases he said he had learned. *"Hai, nani desu ka?"* actually means "Yes, what is it?" if said to a subordinate or a colleague and "Yes, what can I do for you?" if said to a superior or a guest. (Incidentally, *nani* is pronounced as such only if it is the only word asked or said as a reply. In the company of other words, it is abbreviated to *nan*, thus, *nan' des' ka*?)

Kombanwa is good evening. (Good morning is *Ohayo!* or *Ohayo gazaimasu*). *Konnichi wa* is good afternoon. He was right with *Domo arigato* (Thanks a lot) but if the intention was to appease the Japanese, it should have been *Domo arigato gozaimasu* to indicate respect.

—CRISTINO M. COLLADO,
Nagoya University, Ph.D. '82

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bin Laden succeeded beyond his wildest dreams–Mahathir

KUALA LUMPUR—Suspected terrorist mastermind Osama bin Laden has succeeded beyond his wildest dreams and created a world of fear in which there is growing confrontation between Muslims and the West, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad said Thursday.

"He has made the whole world frightened, people are frightened to do anything," Mahathir said of the al-Qaida leader who has claimed responsibility for the Sept. 11 terror attacks on the United States.

"Osama bin Laden . . . I think he may have succeeded beyond his dreams.

"And why has he succeeded? Because we are angry, we don't know how to manage these things, and we fall into his trap," he said.

Mahathir acknowledged that the US congressional election results Wednesday were "a vote of confidence in the policies" of President George W. Bush, including his threat to attack Iraq.

But he pointed out that Islamic parties were also growing in strength, an apparent reference to recent elections in Turkey and other countries in the Muslim world.

"The Islamic parties are also becoming popular, so there is also going to be increasing confrontation," Mahathir told a news conference.

"Both sides are going to play up their anger and hatred to the maximum. So we're going to see a world which is not going to be very calm."

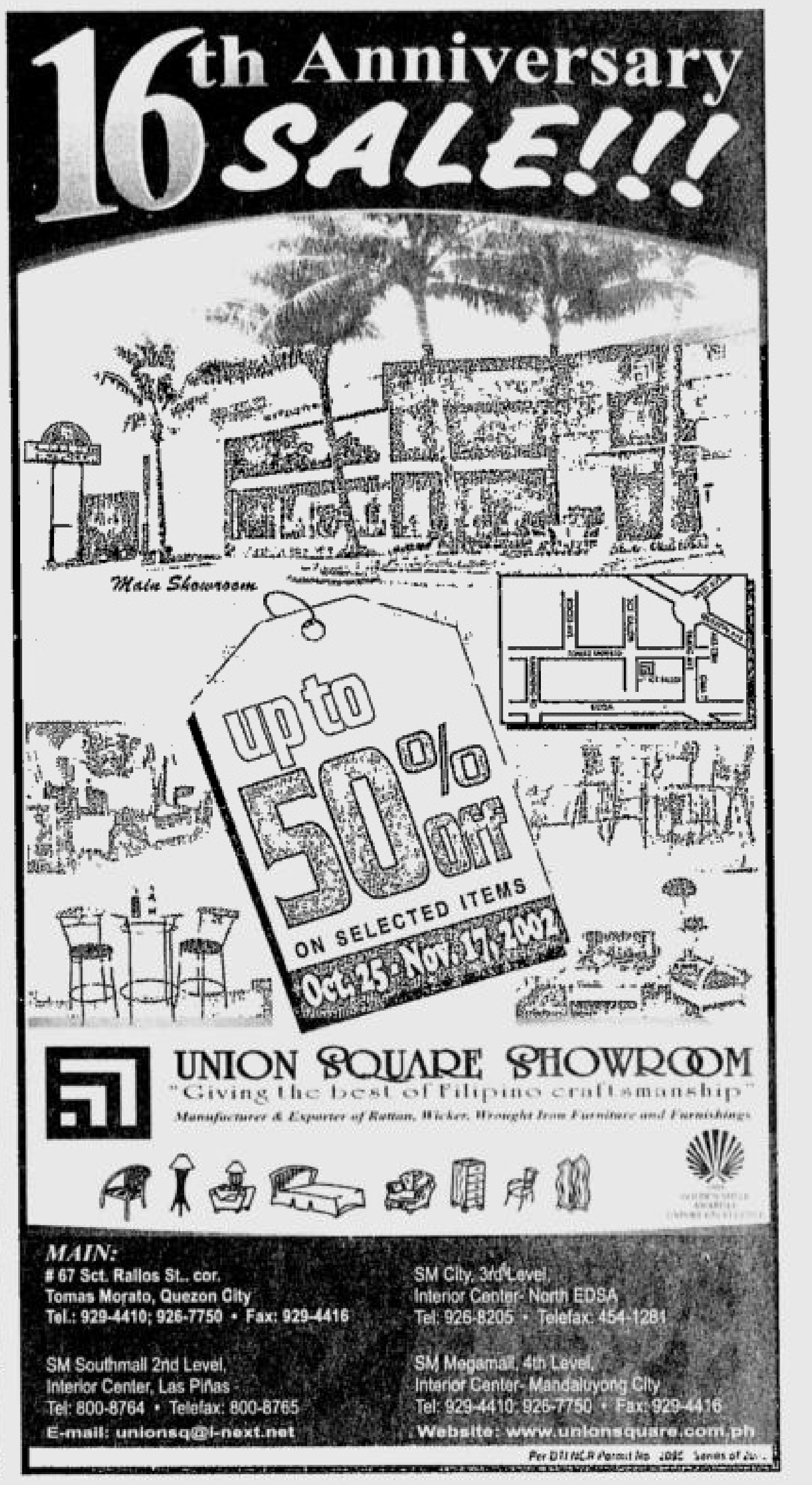
The veteran prime minister, whose government has in detention more than 70 suspected Islamic militants, some with alleged links to al-Qaida, has regularly criticized the conduct of the US-led war on terrorism.

He says it does not address the root causes of terrorism, such as the plight of the Palestinians in the Middle East, and that "anti-Muslim hysteria" in the United States in fact inflames anti-American sentiment.

In response to this perception, Washington is this week funding a television and newspaper advertising campaign here and in Indonesia, which has the world's biggest Muslim population, to mark the Islamic holy month of Ramadan.

The full-page full-color ads show Muslim families living in the United States and saying how they enjoy religious freedom and a lack of prejudice.

A personal Ramadan greeting from Bush, in which he describes Islam as "a peace-loving faith" and extols the virtues of American Muslims, was also faxed to all news outlets in Malaysia But the United States and other Western countries have also been criticized by Southeast Asian nations for warning their citizens not to travel to the region after the Bali bomb blast on Oct. 12 which killed nearly 200 people. *AFP*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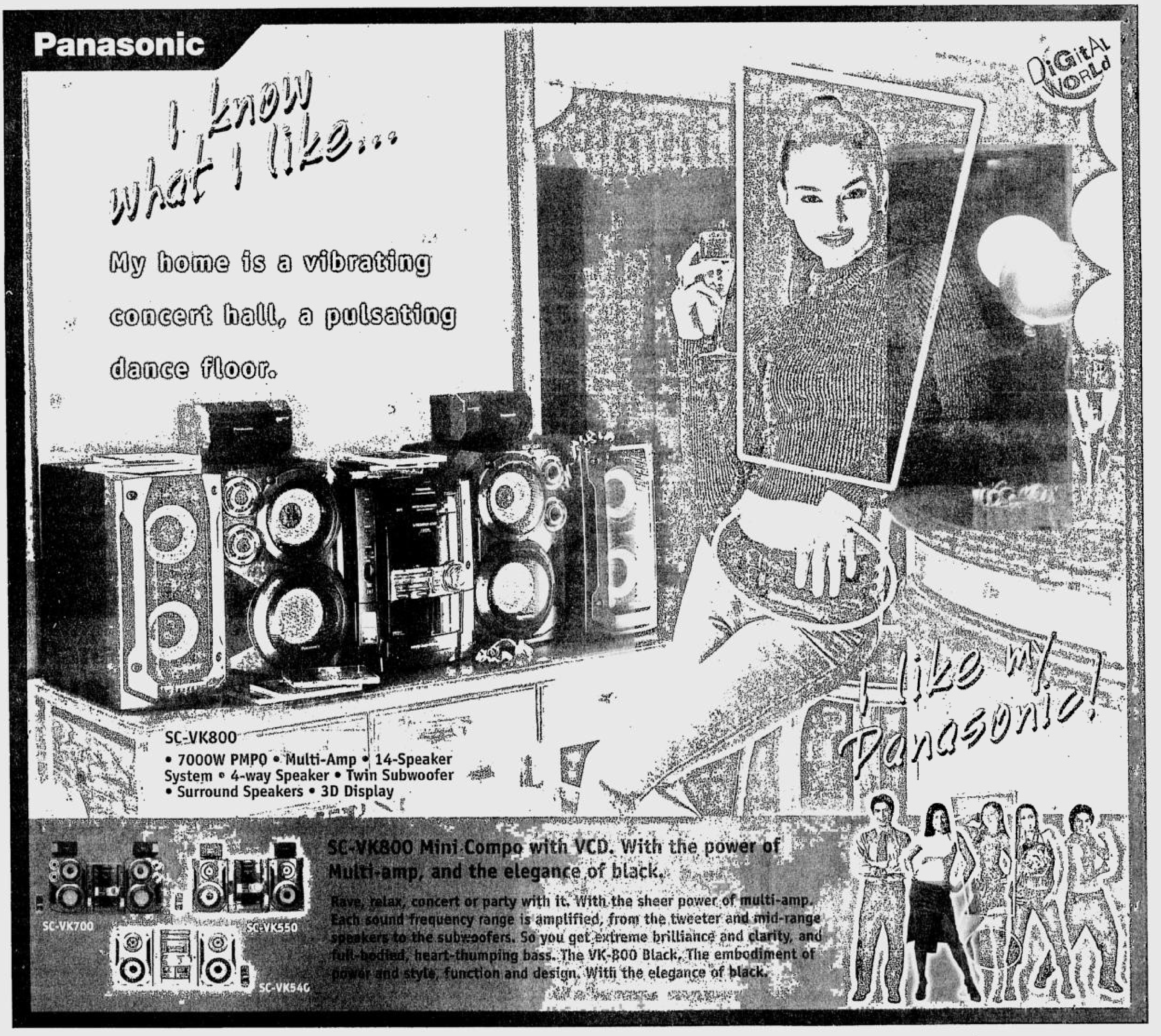
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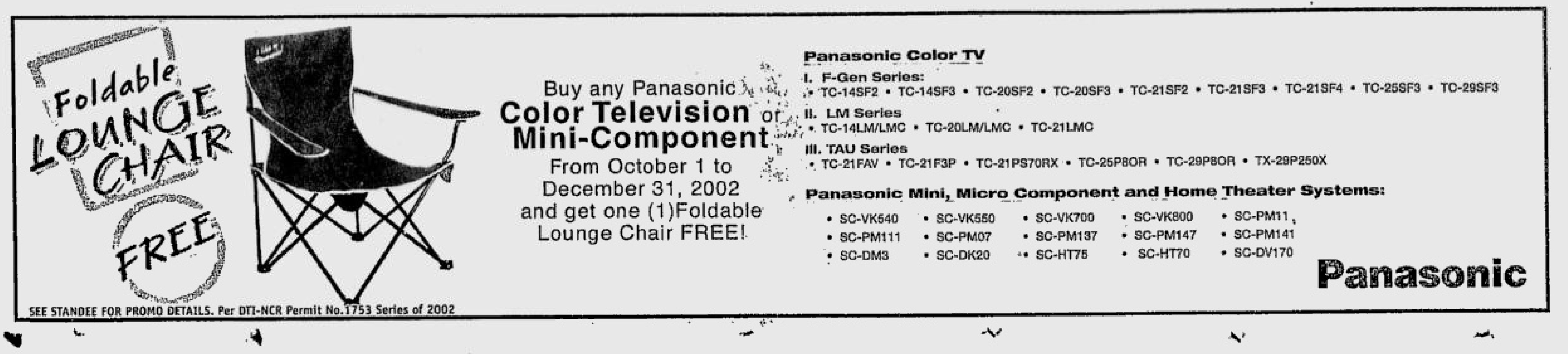

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Republicans sketch new agenda

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush and his party savored sweeping midterm election victories and began sketching an agenda for a new, Republican-controlled Congress. The leader of defeated House Democrats, Rep. Dick Gephardt, signaled he would step down.

"I'm excited to be able to be on offense," said Republican Sen. Trent Lott of Mississippi, the once and future Senate majority leader. He said Republican priorities will include a new Homeland Security Department as well as targeted tax cuts to help the economy. He added that Bush's judicial nominees could expect speedier review.

Bush made no public remarks during the day, and aides said he wanted to avoid giving the appearance of gloating. "There's a lot more to do and the president looks forward to working with Democrats and Republicans to do it," said his spokesperson, Ari Fleischer.

Republicans were assured of 51 seats in the new Senate, a gain of two. Democrats had 47 and the support of one independent. One race remained in doubt, in Louisiana, where Democratic Sen. Mary Landrieu will face Republican Suzanne Terrell in a December runoff.

In the House of Representatives, Republicans had 228 seats—a gain of five—and led for one. Democrats won 203, and led for two. There was one independent.

Senior aides, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said Gephardt intended to declare on Thursday that he would not seek a fifth term as House Democratic leader. The 61-year-old Missouri lawmaker is a potential challenger for the White House in 2004, but it was not known whether he would discuss his presidential ambitions when he made his announcement.

His decision not to seek a new term in leadership came at the end of a day in which two members of the rank and file urged him to step aside. And it triggered a race between the second-ranking and third-ranking members of the leadership, Representatives Nancy Pelosi of California and Martin Frost of Texas.

Gephardt was elected to a 14th term in the House on Tuesday, and is expected to remain in Congress even though he will no longer be leader of his party.

The elections marked a remarkable triumph for Republicans, who bucked history to gain seats in a midterm election in which they held the White House.

One Republican polling firm circulated the results of an election-night survey that showed late-deciding voters gave Bush higher approval ratings than the country at large—and that support for the president was higher, still, among voters in the pivotal House districts where the battle for control was settled.

Democrats conceded the obvious. "This was one tough night," Senate Democratic Leader Tom Daschle said on the morning after, appearing on NBC's "Today" show.

And some party activists grumbled about the party's leadership. "There wasn't any unified message," said David Worley, former chair of the party in Georgia. "I think the national leadership did a miserable job of giving a theme to the election."

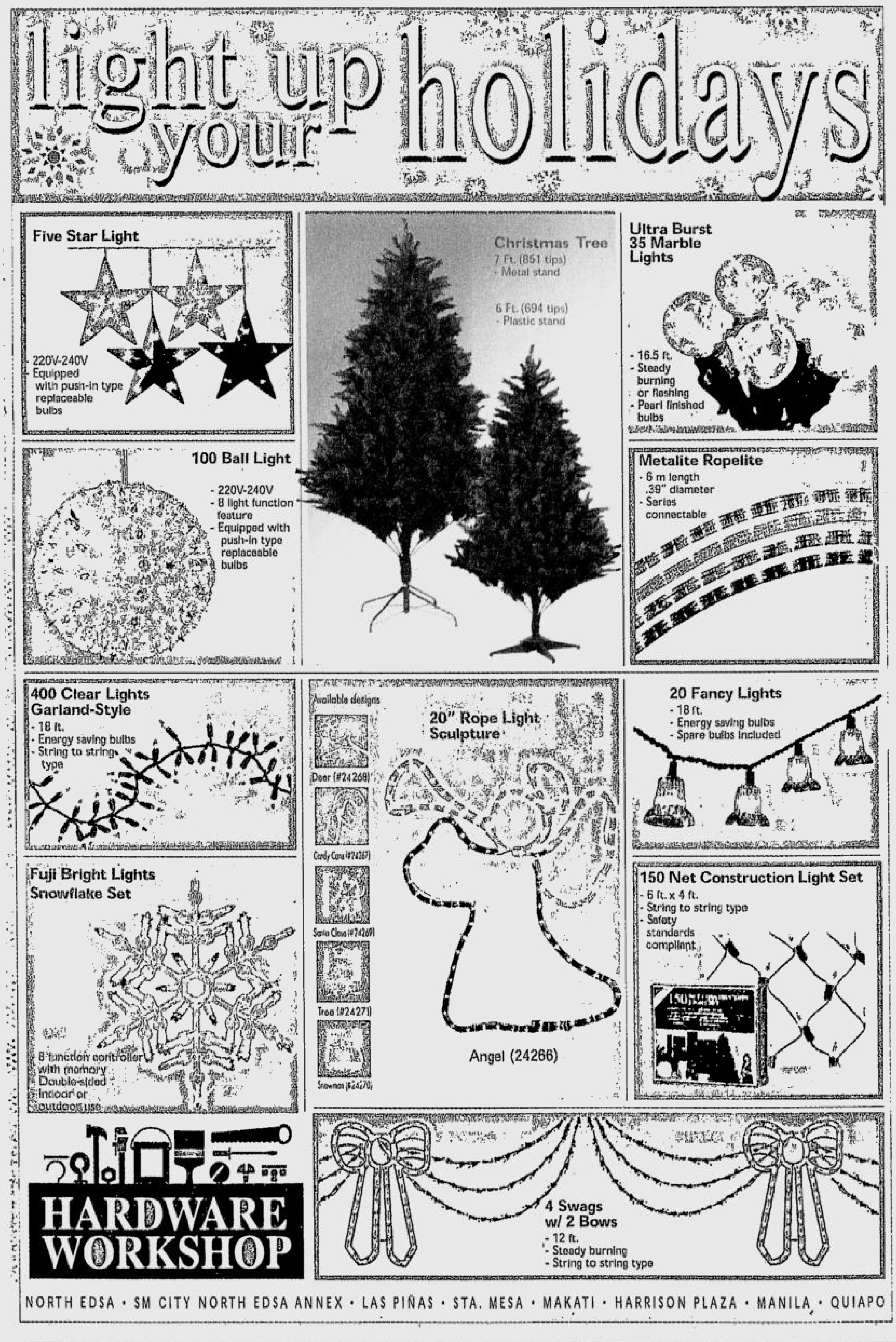
Gephardt flew back to the capital from his Missouri congressional district early in the day to decide his next step. The 26-year congressional veteran was "going to spend a day with his wife and family and talk to friends and advisers and begin making a decision about his future," said his spokesperson, Erik Smith.

Several House Democrats said it was time for a new leader. "It is now clearly time for him to step down," Rep. Peter Deutsch of Florida said of Gephardt.

Rep. Harold Ford of Tennessee said rank-and-file Democrats are asking "some pretty tough questions about his leadership."

A nationwide survey conducted by Public Opinion Strategies, a Republican firm, found a "late surge to Republicans," much as was the case in the Republican landslide year of 1994. Interviews showed that "the handling of Senator Wellstone's memorial service and the way the ballot situation was handled in New Jersey was clearly a factor in helping drive Republican intensity this election," the firm said. *AP*

THE STAR MOSCOW HOSTAGES CAME TO SEE
Yekaterina Guseva, star of the musical "Nord Ost," smiles at a meeting of Russian President Vladimir Putin and cast members taken hostage last month in a Moscow theater, at the Kremlin in Moscow, Nov. 6. Meeting with survivors of last month's hostage crisis, Putin said Wednesday that his government had no doubts about the need to storm the Moscow theater but acknowledged the death toll was high. AP



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WorldBriefs

Iraq may have 2 dozen Scud missiles

WASHINGTON—A US intelligence assessment indicates that Iraq has as many as two dozen old Scud missiles from the 1991 Gulf War which it might be able to fire at Israel or other regional states in any US-led war against Baghdad, US officials said on Wednesday.

The officials, who asked not to be identified, said it was difficult to determine the exact condition of the older battlefield weapons or whether they had been well-maintained by the Iraqi military.

The officials, confirming a report on the intelligence assessment by CNN, said Washington had assured the Israeli government that an attempt would be made to quickly destroy any hidden missiles in case of any war with Iraq.

When asked about possible Israeli retaliation for any missile strike, US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told reporters at a recent briefing that it would not be in Israel's interest to become involved in a conflict with Iraq. *Reuters*

Luxembourg plane crash

LUXEMBOURG—The pilot and one passenger survived when a Luxair plane with 22 people aboard smashed into a field in thick fog near Luxembourg's international airport on Wednesday and burst into flames.

The twin-engine Fokker 50, carrying 19 passengers and three crew on a flight to the Grand Duchy from Berlin, crashed about five km from the airport while coming in to land.

The field is only a few hundred meters from a residential area.

The passenger survived the crash and the fire which engulfed the wreckage with no more than a fractured hand, government spokesperson Guy Schuller told said. "They are quite light injuries," he said of the lucky escape, but declined to identify the passenger. *Reuters*

Kidnapped UK banker freed

TBILISI—Georgian security forces freed kidnapped British banker Peter Shaw, held captive for months in a "hole in the ground" and chained by the neck, during an armed raid in Georgia's lawless Pankisi Gorge on Wednesday.

Shaw, 57, the executive director of a Georgian bank, was seized by heavily armed men in a central district of the Georgian capital Tbilisi in June. He was nearing the end of a six-year spell in the volatile Caucasus state.

Shaw, speaking to Georgian television immediately after his release, said he was "feeling much better than a few hours ago." He said his captors, described by Georgian authorities as an international criminal gang, were "brutal."

"I was kept in a very small cellar, no daylight and half a candle a day. I was chained by the neck, I couldn't move," an exhausted, bedraggled Shaw said. "I spent the last four months in a hole in the ground. I cannot walk very well."

Shaw, who escaped during a shoot-out between Georgian forces and his captors who were trying to move him from one hideout to another, wept as he hugged British embassy staff who came to meet him. *Reuters*

Netanyahu becomes foreign minister

JERUSALEM—Israel's former leader Benjamin Netanyahu became foreign minister on Wednesday, ending more than three years in the political wilderness with a pledge to be tough on the Palestinians and an eye on the top job.

Netanyahu, ousted as prime minister in May 1999, joined Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's government but vowed to challenge him for the leadership of their right-wing Likud party and lead it into an early general election.

Opinion polls show Likud winning the election—expected to take place in January—which Sharon called this week after the center-left Labor Party bolted his coalition in a spat over funds for Jewish settlements.

"The public seeks a way out of the country's quagmire and the man to lead it out. I believe I have the way and the solutions and that most of the public knows this as well," said Netanyahu, 53, popularly known as "Bibi." *Reuters*

Fear in the brain

LONDON—Scientists have pinpointed an area of the brain involved in overcoming fear which may help to improve treatments for people suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder and anxiety attacks.

When they stimulated the region of the brain in laboratory rats who had been conditioned to associate a sound with a small electrical shock, their fear diminished.

"We've found an area of the brain that is activated, or turned on, when fear is reduced. Consistent with that, if we stimulate that area electrically we can reduce fear," said Gregory Quirk of the Ponce School of Medicine in Puerto Rico.

Fear is a reaction to danger and a survival instinct in animals and humans. Scientists had suspected there was a system in the brain that reduced fear without completely erasing the memory of it, but until now they did not know where it was.

"We think we found it because in this part of the prefrontal cortex (of the brain) it is the first time an area has been activated, or turned on, when fear is reduced," he added in an interview. *Reuters*

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Breakthrough in Bali probe

JAKARTA—Indonesian police hinted at a significant breakthrough in the Bali bomb attack probe here Thursday, revealing that a man being quizzed by investigators had been "very, very helpful."

The Indonesian, identified as Amrozi, was flown to Bali from Java on Wednesday evening for further questioning, said police spokesperson Brigadier General Edward Aritonang.

According to media reports Amrozi is a suspected former owner of the Mitsubishi van that exploded on Oct. 12 outside the Sari Club, killing more than 190 people.

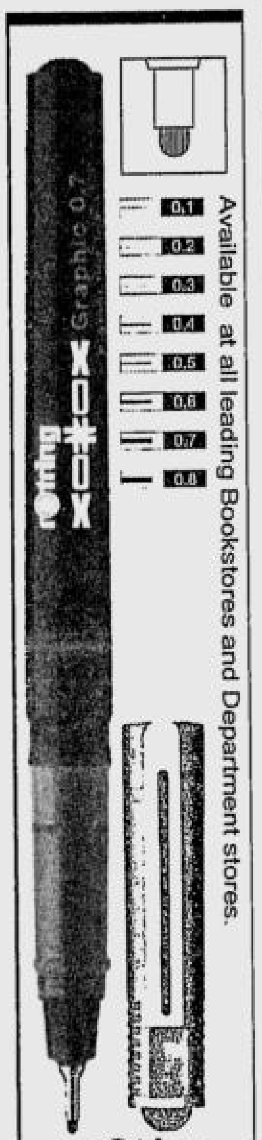
"However the information from this person can be called very, very helpful to the resolution of this case," Aritonang told a press conference broadcast live on radio from Bali.

"This is related to the investigation of the event, which we hope will lead to the perpetrators themselves," he said.

Aritonang refused to confirm local newspaper reports that Amrozi had admitted being the bomber.

Australian Federal Police say a white Mitsubishi L300 van, with a powerful explosive device located in its mid-section, stopped before the massive blast for a few minutes directly in front of the Sari Club.

Police have not formally named anybody a suspect in the Bali bombing. The Asian Wall Street Journal reported Thursday the blast was planned by Hambali, a militant Indonesian Islamic cleric whose whereabouts are unknown. *AFP*



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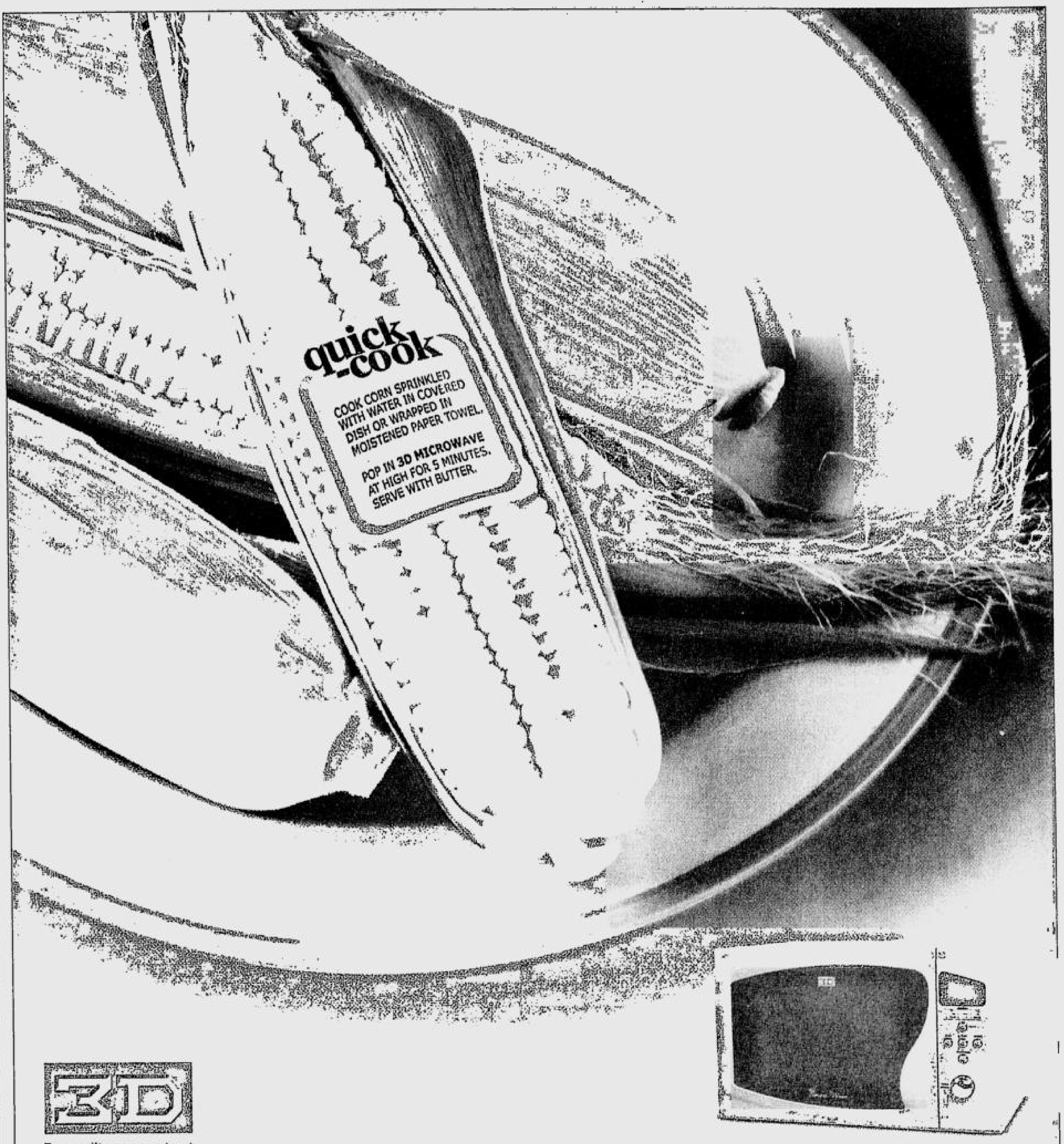
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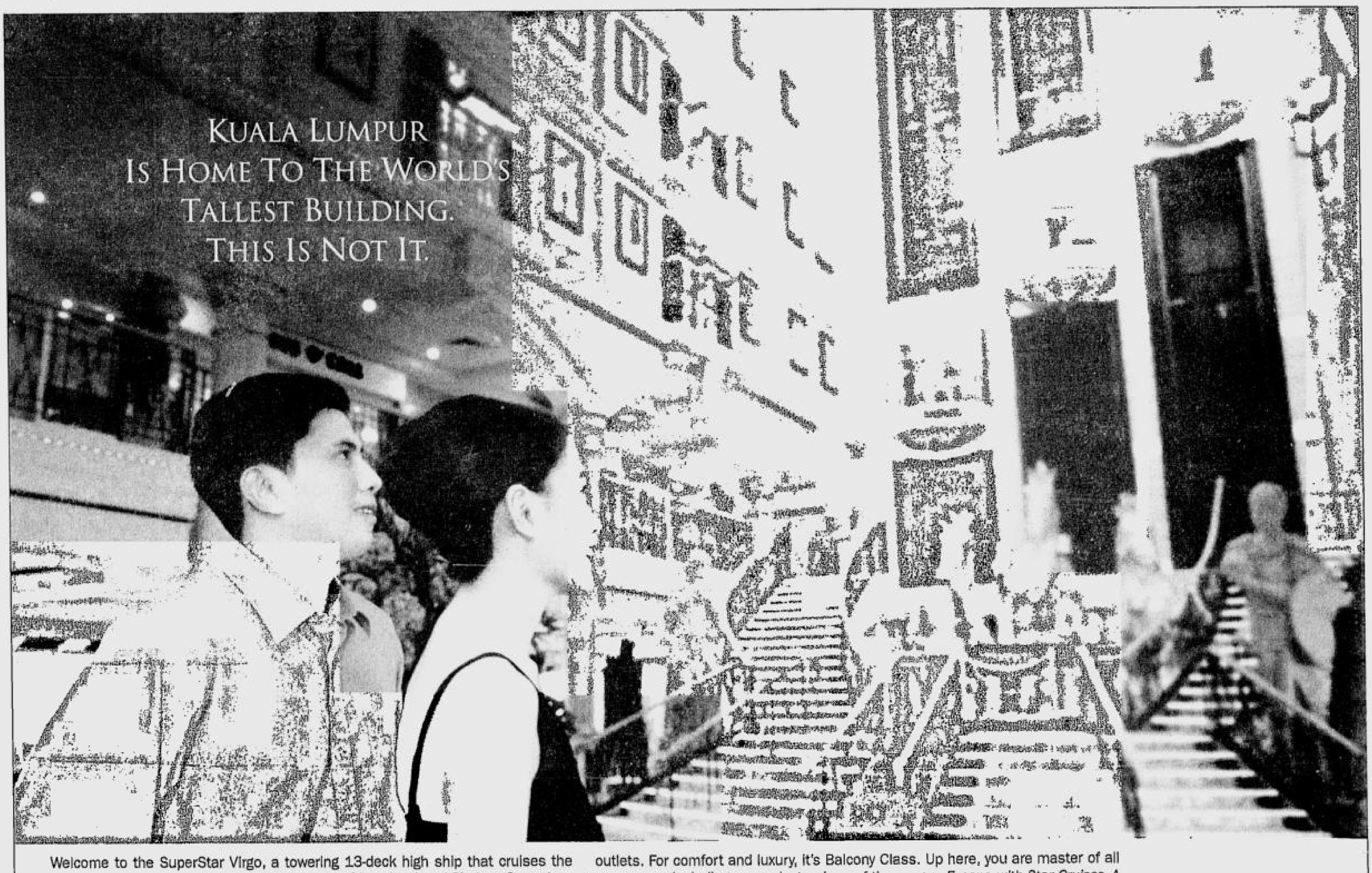
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Farmers demand stop to coconut tree cutting

MATI, Davao Oriental—Hundreds of coconut farmers here and in Tagum City held separate rallies on Tuesday and Wednesday to protest the government's failure to stop massive cutting of coconut trees.

The protesting farmers said the unabated cutting of coconut trees has not only reduced significantly their income, it also threatened to kill their only source of living.

"And the government is not doing anything to stop it, further aggravating the ailing coconut industry in the country," said a statement by the Alyansa sa mga Mag-uuma sa Sidlakang Dabaw.

"We call on the government to take a decisive move to stop the massive cutting of coconut trees. That's the least it can do to help us," the farmers said.

The farmers here held their protest rally at the provincial Capitol on Tuesday, while those in Tagum City staged the rally in front of the Philippine Coconut Authority on Wednesday.

A simultaneous rally, they said, will be held on Nov. 15 in Davao Oriental, Davao del Sur, Davao del Norte and Compostela Valley provinces.

The protesting farmers also called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to stop the proliferating conversion of vast tracts of coconut plantation into commercial and residential areas.

"This is the tactic of big landlords in order to evade the agrarian reform law," the protesting farmers said.

Coconut producers in Davao Oriental said they have no other choice but to convert their farms either into ricefields or mango plantations because of the low prices of copra.

Davao Oriental is the largest coconut producer in the country with an annual average output of at least 250,000 metric tons.

From a high of P20 per kilo in 1998, prices of copra plummeted to a low of P4 per kilo. The reason cited for the sharp decrease was the world market's shift to the use of palm oil.

Jonelito Vicente, officer in charge of the Philippine Coconut Authority in Davao Oriental, said in an earlier interview that he expected the annual output of the coconut industry to further decrease in the coming years because the PCA has stopped its free fertilizer program because of lack of funds.

A World Bank-funded program that gave free fertilizers to coconut farmers ended in 2000. The World Bank extended at least $121.8 million to the Philippine government in 1990 to increase coconut production in the country by giving free fertilizers to coconut growers.

Mati Mayor Francisco Rabat, who owns huge tracts of coconut plantations in Davao Oriental, has advised coconut farmers to diversify. *Ferdinand Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

P1.6-B ROAD PROJECT

DPWH treads on shaky ground

KAYAPA, Nueva Vizcaya—The planned rehabilitation of the Nueva Vizcaya-Benguet Road threatens to dislocate villagers here whose houses and vegetable farms lie directly along the road's proposed path.

This developed as the Department of Public Works and Highways said it would implement next year the initial phase of the P1.6-billion highway project from Aritao, Nueva Vizcaya to Benguet and Baguio City.

The project involves the concreting of the two-lane, 103-km road from Barangay Kirang in Aritao to Baguio City.

The road will pass through Kayapa and Bokod town in Benguet, traversing the Cordillera mountains and the foot of Mount Pulag, Luzon's highest peak.

The project is funded under the Philippine-Japan highway loan of the DPWH, according to Ben Bautista, project engineer.

But Kalanguya and Ibaloi villagers in Barangay Pingkian here have opposed their relocation to make way for a new route of the road, Kayapa Mayor Tony Dupiano said.

A number of the affected villagers were earlier forced to relocate after their houses and farmlands were buried by landslides and were washed away by floods from the swollen Pampanga River following the 1990 killer earthquake.

"There is some opposition but we are hopeful that this will be settled eventually through negotiations," Dupiano said, adding that the DPWH is considering offering compensation for the villagers, including payment for their land and other pieces of property that would be destroyed once the project starts.

But Bautista expressed fear that the residents would encounter difficulties in getting compensation as some of them might lack the documents that would prove that they owned the land that they occupy.

Instead of relocating the residents, the DPWH has proposed as an alternative the construction of a 4-km concrete viaduct to prevent the destruction of homes and farms, Dupiano said.

But while a viaduct may have several advantages, it would cost P1.6 billion, the project's current total budget, he said.

Dupiano said he was optimistic that the project would finally end the woes of vegetable and cut-flower farmers here in transporting their produce to Baguio City.

"This (project) will not only benefit the people of Northern Luzon but most of all, this is beneficial to our agriculture industry," he said. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

NBI agent, wife gunned down in front of kids

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—A confidential agent of the National Bureau of Investigation and his wife were shot and killed by a lone gunman in front of their two children in their house here on Wednesday night.

The killing of Ricardo Martin, past president of the Pampanga Shooters Club a group of gun enthusiasts, and his wife, Dr. Maricris Nicdao, a veterinarian, raised questions on security measures in upper-middle class subdivisions in the city, according to Senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, chief of police of Pampanga.

The killing brought to five the number of murder cases that had occurred at Pilar Village in Barangay San Isidro during the last 12 years, according to homeowners in the village.

The village is one of this city's five upper-middle class subdivisions.

The couple was gunned down at around 7:15 p.m. by a man known only to the Martin family as Abel.

Investigation showed that Martin was about to fetch his wife from their house at around 7:15 p.m. to attend a meeting in a restaurant here for the coming Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo Shooters' Cup, a tournament for gun owners and enthusiasts.

Upon reaching the gate, Martin saw the suspect on board a motorcycle waiting for him. Martin apparently knew the suspect because he reportedly approached the man and talked to him. While they were talking, Mrs. Martin went out of the house with her one-year-old child. Gunshots suddenly rang out and Martin fell down.

A witness, whose identity was withheld by the police for security reasons, saw and heard Mrs. Martin screaming and running away from the scene.

But the gunman chased her and fired at her and fled on board his motorcycle.

Neighbors of the victims rushed the Martins to the Mt. Carmel Hospital where they were pronounced dead on arrival.

The children were not hurt.

Investigators recovered seven empty casings of bullets for a .45 cal. pistol from the crime scene.

Mendoza said the attack on the Martins was "bold and daring" and "filled with hatred." He said the suspect pumped all seven bullets in his gun's magazine into the victims' bodies. *Tonette Orejas and Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

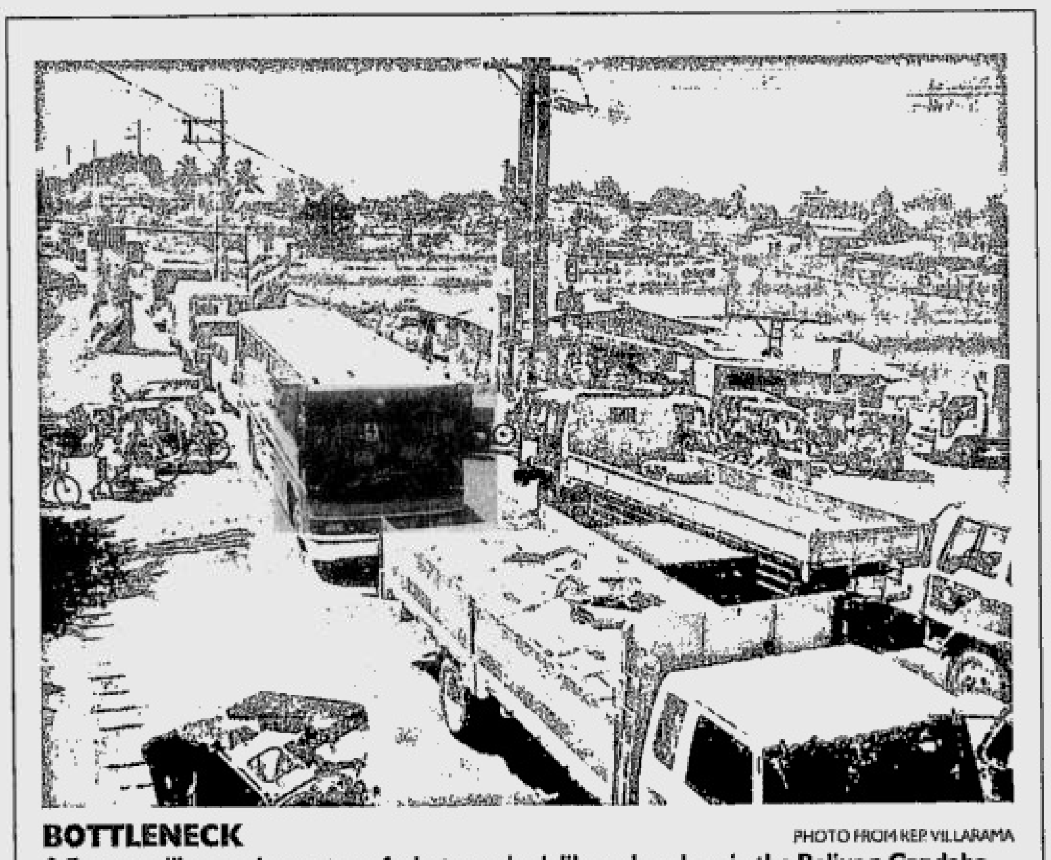
Ateneo Zambo reunion

MEMBERS of the Ateneo de Zamboanga University (ADZU) high school class of 1977 will hold a silver jubilee homecoming on Dec. 6-8 at the ADZU campus in Zamboanga City.

To be honored are high school and grade school classes of 1952 and the college and grade school classes of 1977.

Activities will start Dec. 6 with registration at 9 a.m., Mass at 4 p.m., a torch parade at 6 p.m. and a party after that.

Class members in Metro Manila are advised to contact Bong Nuno (9201045) or Sammy Santos (7115033).



BOTTLENECK

PHOTO FROM REP. VILLARAMA

A flyover will soon rise on top of what now look like ugly pylons in the Baliuag-Candaba intersection in Bulacan where monstrous traffic jams are a daily sight. The budget department has granted the request of Rep. Willy Villarama and several other legislators to release funds for the flyover project.

MISCONDUCT, DECEIT RAPS

SC asked to dismiss, disbar Bulacan judge

CITY OF MALOLOS—A Cagayan-based lawyer asked the Supreme Court to dismiss and disbar a regional trial court judge here for ignorance of the law, grave misconduct and deceit.

Clodualdo Escobar, legal counsel of landowner Cecilia Baldueza, asked Chief Justice Hilario Davide to investigate Judge Arturo Tayag of Bulacan regional trial court for ordering the dismissal of an indirect contempt case without giving the complainant due process.

Tayag, on the other hand, asked the Supreme Court to dismiss the case against him for lack of merit.

"Instead of being commended for expediting the resolution of the cases assigned to me, I was charged," Tayag told the INQUIRER.

Lauro Jocson of Prudential Bank charged Baldueza before Tayag's sala with her failure to pay her monthly dues for the 212-square meter lot in Meycauayan town which she mortgaged through the bank.

Jocson also filed a petition for the issuance of writ of possession before the municipal trial court to forfeit the property.

Baldueza then filed an indirect contempt charge against Jocson for filing the case in two different courts. Jocson asked Tayag to dismiss the case so both parties agreed to set the hearing last Sept. 3.

But on Aug. 22, Tayag junked the indirect contempt case against Jocson.

Escobar, on the other hand, opposed Tayag's decision, saying they were "not given an opportunity to be heard or to comment on the motion filed by (Jocson)."

Tayag told the INQUIRER that he wanted to expedite the cases in his sala so he immediately handed down his decision.

In his three-page comment to the Office of the Court Administrator dated Nov. 4, Tayag said he stated in his July 16 order that he could make a ruling on or before the scheduled hearing.

"As a matter of fact, it is not uncommon for (me) to resolve motions prior to the scheduled dates especially so when the periods granted to the parties had already elapsed and that they had already submitted their respective required pleadings," he said.

"The fact that Baldueza filed an opposition to Jocson's motion to dismiss the charges of indirect contempt was already a clear indication that she was given an opportunity to be heard," he added. *Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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Prosecutors question swift promotions

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—Demoralized prosecutors of the Cebu City prosecutor's office have asked newly appointed Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo to hold some officials of the Department of Justice criminally and administratively liable for the alleged questionable promotion of controversial Assistant City Prosecutor Mary Ann Castro.

In a petition endorsed to the Office of the Ombudsman, 15 assistant city prosecutors have asked Marcelo to investigate Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño, Regional State Prosecutor Hernando Masangkay, Acting City Prosecutor Jose Pedrosa and Deputy Ombudsman for the Visayas Primo Miro, the former city prosecutor of Cebu.

Assistant City Prosecutor Tolomeo Dinoy, one of the petitioners, said the respondents might have a hand in recommending Castro's promotion from an associate prosecuting attorney to prosecutor 1.

He said they questioned her appointment because she did not meet the five-year requirement of the Civil Service Law on promotions. Under this law, a lawyer must be in actual legal practice for five years before he could be appointed as a senior prosecutor.

Castro has only been a practicing lawyer for three years. She was admitted to the Bar sometime in April 1999 and immediately joined the city prosecutor's office as assistant prosecuting attorney. She was promoted prosecutor 1 and subsequently as 4th assistant prosecutor this year by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

It was Miro, then the city prosecutor, who recommended Castro's promotion shortly before he was appointed as the Deputy Ombudsman for the Visayas.

"We don't like to see this violation be repeated otherwise other prosecutors who are working well and were denied the privilege will feel disgruntled, hopeless. We only want quality, fairness in the promotion," Dinoy said.

"We are very much demoralized, that is the reason why one of the signatories of the petition, Prosecutor Gilbert Batayola, asked to be transferred to San Carlos City. We don't want this thing to happen again," he added.

Pedrosa denied he recommended Castro's promotion. He said what he only recommended was for Castro to be appointed as a regular prosecutor.

Power co-op seeks to lower rates

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—While a number of electric distribution firms like the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco) and the Central Negros Electric Cooperative (Ceneco) want to increase their power rates, the Negros Occidental Electric Cooperative Inc. (Noceco) wants to do the opposite.

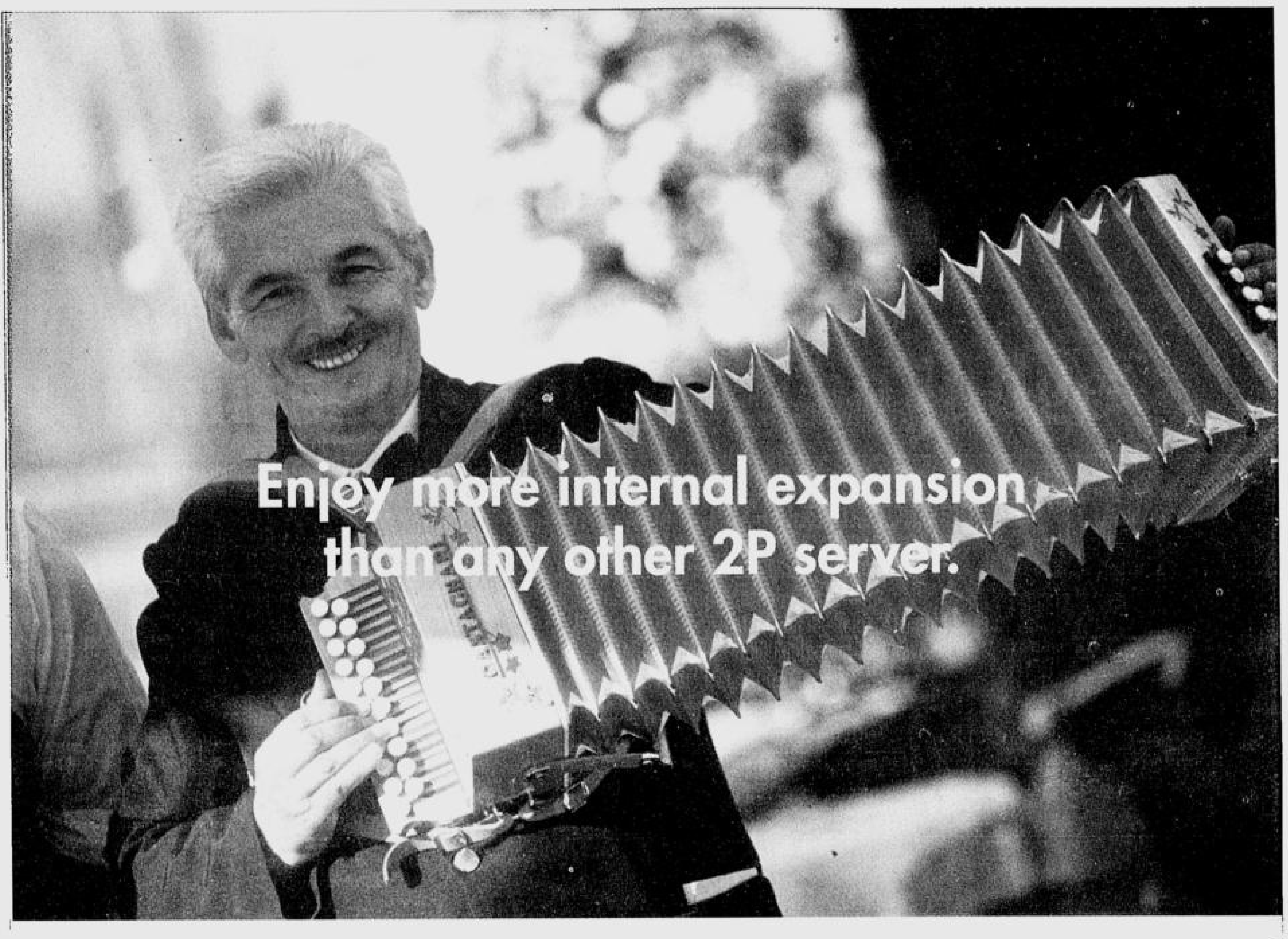
The Noceco has filed an application before the Energy Regulatory Commission to reduce its basic power rate by 23 centavos per kilowatt-hour (Kwh).

The reduction in the power rate will benefit the 80,000 electric consumers in the four cities and 13 cities in southern Negros Occidental served by Noceco.

These are the cities of La Carlota, Himamaylan, Kabankalan and Sipalay and the towns of Pulupandan, Valladolid, San Enrique, Pontevedra, La Castellana, Isabela, Moises Padilla, Hinigaran, Binalbagan, Ilog, Candoni, Cauayan and Hinobaan.

In contrast, residents of the cities of Bacolod, Talisay, Bago and Silay are bracing for higher power costs because of Ceneco's bid for a rate increase of P1.05 per Kwh, claiming a rate hike will be the only way to keep the cash-strapped cooperative afloat.

Lamberto Canlas, Noceco general manager, yesterday said they applied for a reduction of power rates by 23 centavos from their current P3.51 per Kwh since the cooperative is already free of the burden of paying for its multimillion-peso loan with the National Electrification Administration (NEA).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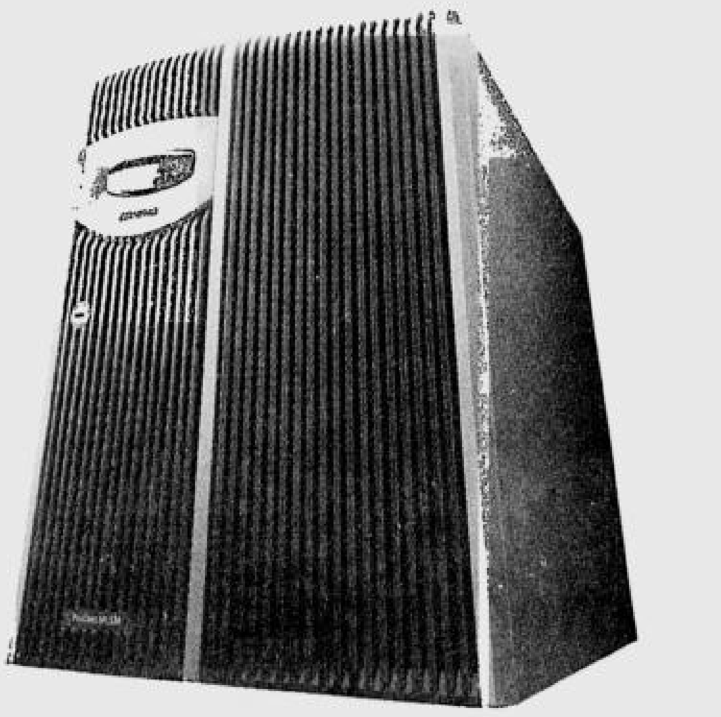

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Abadia under fire for exposing plot

From page A1

He said the issues included delays in the standardization of salaries of soldiers, alleged corruption involving Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, and perceived weakness in the AFP leadership because of the "revolving door policy" in naming AFP chiefs of staff.

Even the opposition in the Senate is growing wary over reports of a coup. "Warts and all, the people and institutions perform better in a democratic setting," Sen. Edgardo Angara said.

Angara said a coup at this time "will permanently cripple the country's already weak democratic institutions."

'Pas-coup'

"It's too early to talk about Pascoup," Monsignor Hernando Coronel, secretary general the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, said in jest, referring to the coup which is supposed to be staged in December. *Pasko* in Filipino means Christmas.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said reports of a coup "assumed the genre of UFO-and-men-from-Mars sightings."

The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) said it had checked various camps across the country and came to the conclusion that no coup would take place.

"There had been no movements, no troop gatherings, no tell-tale signs—contrary to earlier pronouncements of former chief of staff Lisandro Abadia," the AFP said in a statement.

To further make its point, the AFP statement quoted four generals denying reports of a massive recruitment of their soldiers.

"That will never happen. They're merely trying to implicate the Marines. They are merely trying to scare the people," said Maj. Gen. Librado Ladia, commandant of the Philippine Marines. "The AFP has never been more united. We are loyal to the end."

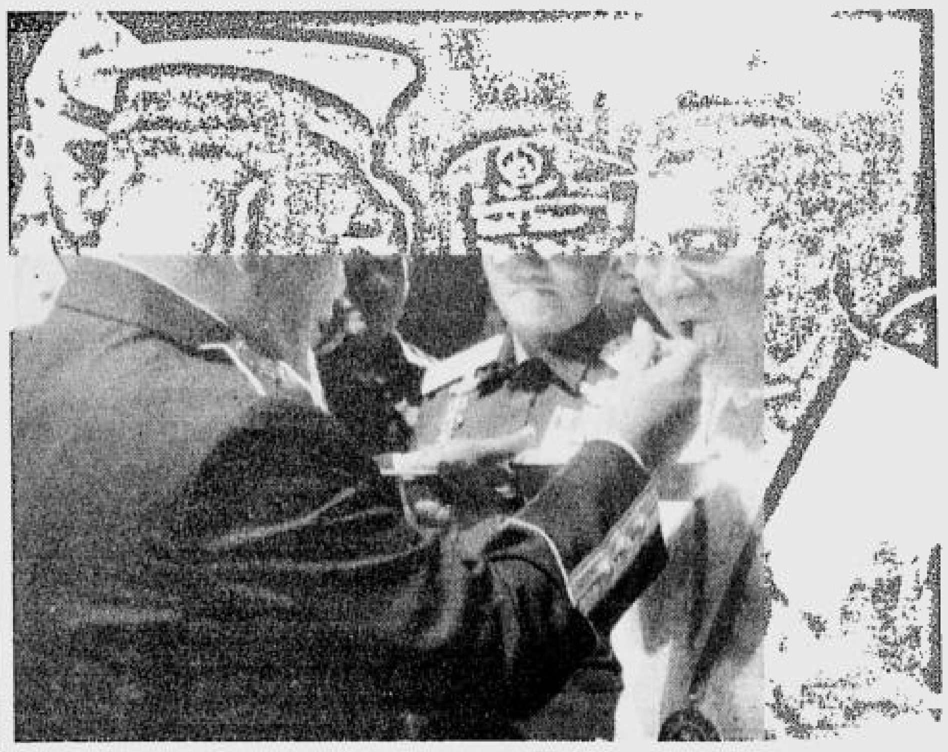
Brig. Gen. Jose Reyes, head of the 15th Strike Wing, said his men would join a coup only if his "feet are permanently horizontal."

Reyes said he had tightened security. "We will the first to strike the coup plotters," he said.

For his part, Brig. Gen. Ralph Flores, head of the 710th Special Operations Wing, said he was in a conference with his commanders when he read the report about recruitment of his men. He said his officers denied the report. "There is nothing developing here in Clark," Flores said.

Brig. Gen, Rodolfo Alvarado of the 5th ID in in Isabela said his men had no time for coup plots. "We are busy fighting the enemy, we are just doing our jobs here, not plotting any coup."

NO ARRIVAL honors for the President who now finds them "corny." Daughter Luli and AFP Chief of Staff Benjamin Defensor, despite serious coup talks, appear happy to have her back. ROGER MARGALLO



A PIECE of cake from Marine commandant, Maj. Gen. Librado Abadia for Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes during the 52nd anniversary of the Philippine Marines on Thursday. At center is AFP Chief of Staff Defensor. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Unjustly implicated

Alvarado along with Maj. Gen. Alberto Braganza of the 7th Infantry Division in Nueva Ecija was "unjustly implicated in the unfounded, baseless rumors of coup," said Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Garcia, the highest Army officer in the Northern Luzon Command.

Garcia described the two generals as "loyal and close" to the President. Braganza served as Ms Macapagal's senior military assistant until he was assigned last year to the 7th ID based in Fort Magsaysay.

Garcia lamented the "inordinate attention" given by some sectors to the plot to oust Ms Macapagal. He said reports on the planned coup have "distracted" his troops. He did not elaborate.

As the generals distance themselves from the alleged coup plot, Defensor said no coup would succeed without a leader.

"No coup succeeds without a leader and there is no coup leader. Who are these plotters anyway? There may be one or two of them, himself and his mother, but they make it appear that they have many through text messaging and noise," Defensor said in the AFP statement.

Defense Secretary Reyes chose to remain silent. Reyes' spokesperson, Ros Manlangit, said that the defense secretary would stick to an earlier statement challenging his critics to come out in the open and file charges with the courts.

The defense secretary's staff later released a transcript of an interview conducted yesterday morning in which Reyes said that rumors of a coup were mere rumors. "No coup would be carried out," he said.

The military spokesperson, retired Brig. Gen. Eduardo Purificacion, said Abadia's pronouncements were without basis.

"There had been allegations (of a coup) before, but unless (the allegations are) proven beyond reasonable doubt, it will not carry any official tag or judgement," Purificacion said.

No laughing matter

But Representative Gonzalez said Abadia's statement was no laughing matter. "The President should take this very seriously. The government should not be whistling in the dark," he said.

"This adventurism must be nipped in the bud," Gonzalez said, adding that the government should "spare nobody" in a thorough investigation.

He suggested that a commission be formed to conduct the investigation, which he said should also look into the legitimate complaints of soldiers, including low pay and delays in the granting of salary increases.

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay, chair of the House defense committee, chided Abadia for fanning the coup rumors.

"Considering the stature of General Abadia, if he has any evidence he should report it to the President and not to the media because it causes undue alarm to the country," Pichay said.

He said coup rumors fly whenever there is an impending appointment of a new chief of staff. Pichay said Abadia could only be trying to curry favors from the President.

Assistant Minority Leader Abraham Mitra said the opposition would not support the coup. "We will never be a party to a violent overthrow of the duly constituted authority," said Mitra, a Palawan congressman who belongs to the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino.

"Those who are concocting this doomed military adventure should not expect support from us," Mitra said, adding that coup rumors are "lethal to the country."

In the Senate, Angara said: "A strong Congress, an independent judiciary, the concept of civilian supremacy or even a free press will all vanish if a coup succeeds. And the damage will be permanent."

Angara, president of the opposition Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino, maintained that the mainstream opposition "is opposed to any extra-constitutional means of taking power despite the weak and vacillating leadership of President Macapagal-Arroyo."

"Filipinos want to change Ms Macapagal in 2004 and not through a coup," he said.

Another opposition solon, Sen. Teresa Aquino-Oreta, called on the coup plotters "to wait until 2004 to effect a legally and orderly change of government."

"Resorting to extra-constitutional shakeup is the last thing that the Philippines needs in the face of a global economic slump and weakening investor confidence in the country," she said. *With reports from Carlito Pablo and Armand N. Nocum in Manila; Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Church stands squarely behind GMA administration

By Armand N. Nocum

THE CATHOLIC Church continues to stand squarely behind the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo in the face of plans to unseat her, a Church official said yesterday.

"The Church is supporting the government in its efforts to do something good for the country and ... to put it back on its feet," said Fr. Joselito Jopson, director of the Manila Archdiocesan Office on Communication.

Jopson was interviewed while attending a eucharistic celebration for the departed bishops, priests, religious men and women at the Minor Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz in Binondo, Manila. The Mass was officiated by Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin.

Jopson, who faced the media in behalf of Sin, asked Filipinos to help save the government from those out to topple it.

"Actually, in securing democracy, we really have to do our part," he said. "We should wake up to the realization that all of us are responsible for the task of nation-building."

Noting that those behind efforts to unseat the government could be motivated by political interests, Jopson appealed to them to stop such form of military adventurism.

"Let's stop the politicking," he said, as he declared that a "coup d'etat is a political act."

Gloria goes straight to MMC to visit apo

From page A1

gal entertained was that regarding Mikaela Gloria, who was born Monday night to her elder son, Pampanga Vice Gov. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, and his wife Angela.

"May she grow up to be a good servant of the Lord," the President said when asked about her blessing for the child.

"She's excited to see her granddaughter's dimples," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. "She can't wait to see her."

Gen. Benjamin Defensor, Armed Forces chief of staff, and Director General Hermogenes Ebdane, chief of the Philippine National Police, led the military and police brass in showing support for the President in the wake of the supposed coup plot.

Corny

The President will also drop the customary departure speech each time she goes abroad.

"Wala na, corny e," she told reporters in Hanoi on the eve of her return to Manila.

Ms Macapagal has been breaking protocol of late.

When she left for Mexico and the United States on Oct. 23, she did not deliver a departure speech.

At the time Tiglao explained that she did not want to waste time making unnecessary speeches: "It saves time, and the President's time is an important commodity."

She also did away with a departure speech when she left for Cambodia on Nov. 3 to attend the 8th Asean Leaders' Summit.

According to protocol, the President has to deliver an arrival and a departure speech each time he/she leaves for abroad.

In this way, the President explains the agenda of the trip and, later, its outcome.

The speeches used to be the central part of the send-off and welcome ceremonies, and like her predecessors, Ms Macapagal had followed this protocol since assuming the presidency last year.

Tiglao yesterday distributed to reporters copies of a prepared "arrival speech" in which the President expressed satisfaction over the trips she made to Mexico (for the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit) and the United States, Cambodia (for the Asean summit) and Vietnam (for a state visit).

"(The events) immensely contributed to the Philippine economy and national security," she said. "They are important to the well-being of our people and the alleviation of poverty through investments and jobs."

Terror agreement

In the undelivered speech, the President also said Vietnam was considering signing the Trilateral Agreement on Terrorism that the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia and Thailand had signed.

"Overall regional security against terrorists would improve greatly if the six nations sharing common seas were part of the accord," she said.

The Philippines was able to reach an agreement with Vietnam on a framework for peace in the South China Sea.

The agreement expressing support of the Asean declaration on the conduct of parties in the South China Sea was signed by Foreign Secretary Blas Ople and Vietnamese Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien in the presence of the two Presidents.

Under the framework, the Philippines and Vietnam agree to refrain from any action that may complicate the territorial disputes of the six claimants to the Spratly Islands.

The Spratlys, said to be rich in oil, are being claimed by the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, Vietnam, China, and Taiwan. Other contested territories include the Scarborough Shoal, claimed by the Philippines and China, and the Paracel Islands, disputed by China and Vietnam.

Ms Macapagal also signed an agreement with Vietnamese President Tran Duc Luong for an increase in trade between the two countries to as much as $600 million. *With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

Fil-Ams post victories in US elections

From page A1

calCircus.com, an online political news site for the Asian-Pacific-American community.

In Pennsylvania, Republican State Representative Jeff Coleman ran unopposed in his reelection bid for a second term. At 27, he's the youngest member of the State House of Representatives and represents Apollo, Pennsylvania, an area just outside Pittsburgh.

"In West Virginia, State Delegate Jon Amores handily won his 5th term," Salinas said. "Amores was the third highest vote-getter in the area in this week's election."

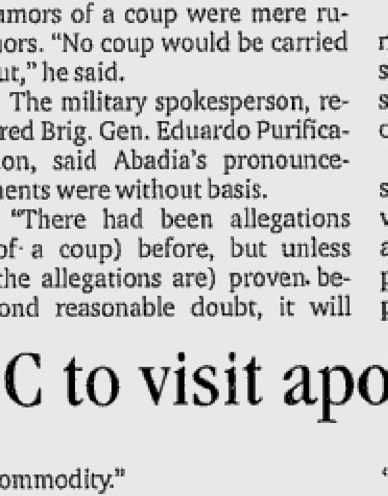
Salinas served in Amores' campaign when he ran in the primary for the US House of Representatives two years ago. Amores withdrew from the race, after receiving lukewarm financial support from the Filipino-American community in the Greater Metro D.C. area of this city, and the neighboring states of Virginia and Maryland.

Visibly absent from Tuesday's ballot was State Delegate David Valderrama of the nearby state of Maryland. He has the distinction of being the first Filipino-American elected to a top post in the US mainland.

Cayetano did not run

Fil-Am Democratic Gov. Ruben Cayetano is the first highest elected official in Hawaii. After completing two terms and almost losing in the last elections, he did not run for reelection this year.

Valderrama lost the Democratic primary in September for the State Senate. In 1990, he won his first term as a state delegate by forging a coalition with African American State Sen. Gloria Lawlah, whom he opposed in September's primary.



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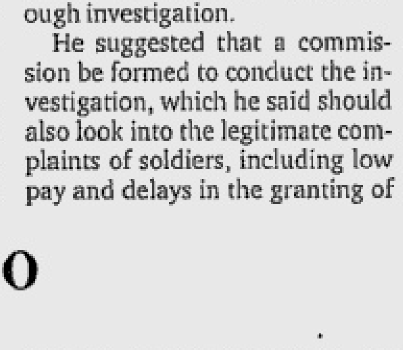

VELORIA

In the West Coast, State Representative Velma Veloria (D-11, Position, 2), won reelection in Washington State.

Filipino-American officials are mostly Democrats. Among other things, they focus on issues on education, civil rights, and immigration. They are pro-choice (favoring the right of women to abortion).

Republican Filipino-American officials are pro-life (against abortion), and also focus on education and strong law enforcement.

Tuesday's elections involved races for all 435 congressmen, two-thirds of the 100-member Senate, 36 governors and local seats in the state assemblies.

Population

Based on Census 2000, Filipino Americans are the second largest Asian group in the United States at close to 2.4 million people, next to the Chinese Americans. This figure represents a 68-percent increase from a decade ago.

But community leaders say the actual total is close to 3 million Filipinos, including those who entered the US illegally.

Filipinos are also the second fastest-growing minority group, next to Mexican Americans. This is due to high birth and immigration rates. An average of 65,000 emigrate to the United States every year.

Over half of Filipinos—a total of 1,252, 610—reside in California (San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles in the West Coast) and Washington state, and also in Hawaii.

Other areas with strong Filipino presence are New York and New Jersey in the East Coast.

Here in the Greater Metropolitan DC area, the largest concentration of Filipinos is found in Fairfax in the state of Virginia, as well as in the nearby state of Maryland in Prince George's county and the Montgomery counties of Fort Washington and Oxon Hill.

3 top Sayyaf leaders charged

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Two Basilan-based Abu Sayyaf leaders, another from Sulu and seven others were charged with multiple murder and several counts of frustrated and attempted murder in connection with the Oct. 17 Shop-o-rama bombing here that killed seven persons and wounded at least 100 others.

Supt. Marvin Bola-bola, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) for Western Mindanao, said formally charged before the city prosecutor's office were Khadaffy Janjalani, Engr. Antel Jainal Sali Jr. alias Abu Sulaiman, Radulan Sahiron, Amilhamja Ajijul, Muksin Ajijul Ahadil and five others earlier arrested for multiple counts of murder and frustrated murder.

Bola-bola said the police has "hard evidence" against Basilan-based Janjalani and Sulaiman and Sulu-based Sahiron.

He said captured bomber Bas Ismael admitted that he received instructions from the three Abu Sayyaf leaders who called him between Oct. 10 and 12.

"We also have documents to prove that he was also in Sulu on those dates," Bola-bola said.

"Ismael informed us that he was called by these three Abu Sayyaf leaders to implement other terroristic activities in this city," Senior Insp. Madzgani Mukaram, CIDG regional deputy director, said. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Bomb expert released

KABACAN, Cotabato—The alleged bomb expert of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front arrested for possessing explosive materials was freed after posting bail the other day.

The release of Ismael Sulaiman alias Abu Hashim was confirmed by provincial jail warden Jose Calimutan.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu also confirmed the release but insisted that the MILF had nothing to do with it.

"He was released through the help of his relatives," Kabalu said, hinting that Sulaiman's relatives were behind the posting of the P208,000 bail.

Sulaiman, who is also a suspect in the Oct. 10 blast in Kidapawan City, was detained at the provincial jail on Oct. 30, two days after his arrest in Barangay Raradangan in Alamada town. Before he was turned over to the police, Sulaiman claimed he was manhandled by the military.

"There were marks of rope on his wrists. He said he was tortured and somehow it could be true because he was almost crying when he was telling me that," said Roberto Espinosa, a fellow detainee. *Jeffrey M. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

GMA told US not to include MILF in terror list

From page A1

Apo, told Davao reporters the country would get more support from the US government if the MILF were blacklisted.

"The US government will surely give us more support, training and logistics with this new development," Aglipay said.

And in Camp Aguinaldo, the military spokesperson said the Islamic holy season of Ramadan wouldn't stop the Armed Forces from launching counter-strikes against the MILF.

"We respect the Ramadan but if they try to sow terror and violence in the countryside, there is no alternative for the military except to fight back or to pursue them in the least," retired Gen. Eduardo Purificacion said.

The remarks came after suspected rebels in the South killed seven people in what was believed to be retaliation for the death of a guerrilla leader.

The attack on villagers in Tubaran town, in Lanao del Sur province, at dawn Wednesday was allegedly carried out by MILF guerrillas, said Philippine National Police chief Hermogenes Ebdane, quoting a regional police report.

Pentagon gang

The President said that in her meeting with Fitts she also made a distinction between the MILF and the kidnap-for-ransom Pentagon Gang, which allegedly consists of former MILF fighters.

The United States has included the Pentagon in its list.

The meeting took place before US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone's posting to Manila.

Thus far, Ms Macapagal said, the US Embassy has not requested that the MILF be blacklisted, which would put it in the same league as the Abu Sayyaf, the Pentagon Gang and the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army.

She pointed out that the MILF leadership has cooperated with authorities in tracking down suspected criminals in their organization.

"Our police officers gather that the MILF really wants peace," she said.

The President has yet to declare the resumption of formal peace talks with the MILF, however. Her adviser for special concerns, Norberto Gonzales, has been engaged in "back-channel talks" with the MILF leadership since early this year.

In Davao City, Aglipay admitted that the military lacked the logistics to fight terrorism and that any support from the United States would be welcome.

This was also the reason the government divided Mindanao into two areas of operation with a unified force, he said.

"Insurgency would be the primary concern of the police and the AFP would take care of the outside threat. We will use all the assets and logistics to finish off (the) enemies," Aglipay said.

At the AFP headquarters, Purificacion said anybody who sows violence or has no respect for human rights should be considered as terrorists.

"So if the MILF, its break-away groups (are) there fighting the soldiers, they are no better than terrorist groups," he said.

MILF denial

But MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu denied regular guerrilla forces were involved in the Lanao del Sur massacre. The attack may have been part of a personal feud between the town police chief and a local MILF militia leader who was killed along with three of his men by police the previous day, he said.

National police operations chief Vidal Querol said soldiers and police were pursuing about 200 guerrillas allegedly involved in the massacre.

He said the rebels swooped down on the village of Tangkal and indiscriminately fired on the victims' houses. Responding policemen wounded an undetermined number of guerrillas, he said.

He said the attack came barely six hours after police killed alleged MILF commander Said Kali and three of his men. The four were stopped from entering Tubaran carrying their weapons and, after a heated argument, a gunfight erupted, he said. The police suffered no casualties.

Querol said police would look into the alleged feud.

Terror lair?

In the Senate, administration Sen. Ralph Recto chided the President for repeatedly painting the Philippines as a terrorist lair in the hope of getting a windfall in military aid from the United States.

Recto said the Macapagal administration has been claiming al-Qaida links of homegrown terrorists, a picture that drove down foreign investor confidence in the country.

"Before the President tries another tack at courting foreign investors, she should first throw out the terrorist-plagued picture of the Philippines she has been wildly painting about all over town," he said. *With reports from Martin Marfil; Cynthia Balana; AP; Anthony S. Allada, Ayan C. Mellejor and Ryan D. Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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GLIMPSE OF HISTORY, A SIGHT TO BEHOLD First day of public viewing of Juan Luna's "Parisian Life" at the GSIS museum, and a stream of visitors arrives, among them grade school children from the Roosevelt College. The painting bought by the GSIS at Christie's auction two weeks ago for a record P46 million will eventually hang in a room that will replicate its original site at the Nakpil ancestral home in Quiapo.

ERIK ARAZAS

Winona guilty

From page A1

tress Winona Ryder was convicted on Wednesday of shoplifting from one of the upscale stores in Beverly Hills.

A jury that included at least three people from the entertainment industry convicted the "Age of Innocence" star of walking out of Saks Fifth Avenue last December with shopping bags stuffed with $5,500 worth of designer silk tops, leather handbags, glittery rhinestone hair bows and socks.

Prosecutors, who suggested that Ryder might have stolen for thrills, said they would not seek jail time for the 31-year-old actress during her sentencing on Dec. 6. The charges carry a possible prison sentence of up to three years.

The jury found her guilty of grand theft and vandalism but not guilty of commercial burglary. That charge required proof that she had gone to the store intending to steal.

Ryder did not testify in her own defense during a humiliating six-day trial in which her haul of ripped silk tops and leather handbags costing up to $700 each were put on display for all to see.

The "Girl, Interrupted" star, whose career has been on hold during the 10 months since her arrest, looked tense but poised in an SRO courtroom as the verdicts were read.

She was whisked out of court and away from the media, but her publicist told Reuters that her car was followed by news helicopters and paparazzi.

Why did she do it?

Ryder later issued a one-sentence statement thanking her family, friends and supporters for standing by her.

Why a rich celebrity should commit such a tawdry crime was left to guesswork. "I can't get inside her head. She may have been stealing for the thrill of it, or to see if she can get away with it," trial prosecutor Ann Rundle said at a news conference on Wednesday.

Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley said he hoped the court would "address the problems of the defendant that may have led her to engage in the criminal conduct of which she now stands convicted."

Cooley did not identify what these problems were. There was also no testimony about any adversity with which the actress might have been dealing with. Ryder had claimed she had been treated for depression and exhaustion.

One of the jurors was quoted as telling the TV show, "Celebrity Justice," that the jury was "especially impressed" by the merchandise displayed in court and thought the Saks security guards called as witnesses were "very credible and admirable."

The unidentified juror said Ryder's star status had "absolutely no impact whatsoever."

Ryder's flamboyant attorney, Mark Geragos, declined to talk with the waiting media throng but later said he would ask for a new trial.

His defense case was based on an alleged elaborate conspiracy involving planted evidence and perjury by Saks staff to single out Ryder as a target because of her celebrity.

But Geragos' main defense witness only left the courtroom reeling in laughter. The witness, a former Saks employee, testified that a Saks security manager had vowed to "nail" Ryder and would "make the evidence" to convict her.

Under cross-examination, the witness admitted an unresolved personal grievance with Saks, which led to a lawsuit and the store taking out a trespassing warning against him.

Written in Hollywood

Rundle dismissed the defense case during the trial as "a story that could only have been written in Hollywood."

The prosecution's case against Ryder was overwhelming. It featured a 90-minute surveillance video of Ryder in a long coat roaming around the store and struggling with multiple shopping bags while piling merchandise over her arm or under a garment bag.

The most damaging testimony came from a Saks security guard who testified to seeing Ryder in a Saks dressing room—not trying on designer gowns but kneeling on the floor with a bleeding finger, snipping security tags off handbags, wrapping up socks in tissue paper and hiding them in her shopping bags.

Four witnesses testified how polite, calm and apologetic Ryder had been after her arrest. She claimed first that she thought her assistant had paid for the goods. She later claimed that her director had told her to shoplift in preparation for a movie role.

The "director" was never found. Most of the Saks witnesses did not recognize Ryder at the time of her arrest—some thought she was a homeless woman.

There were also no receipts for the 20 items found in Ryder's bags or strapped under her coat.

At the start of her shopping spree, she paid more than $3,000 for a jacket and two blouses. The defense claimed Ryder believed the store would keep her account "open" and charge her later. But there was no evidence of such an account.

Very nice

Rundle said the prosecution would ask for "probation, community service and restitution to Saks" rather than jail time for Ryder.

"I find Ms Ryder to be very nice. This was never about her character, only her conduct," she said.

Ryder's arrest drew international attention. Media interest grew when Ryder appeared on "Saturday Night Live" and MTV joking about her case. Efforts to settle the case failed.

Ryder's films include "Beetlejuice," "Edward Scissorhands," and "Bram Stoker's Dracula."

"Little Women" earned Ryder an Academy Award nomination for best actress. She was previously a supporting actress Oscar nominee for "The Age of Innocence."

Ryder was raised by parents who were part of the 1960s counterculture. Her godfather was the late LSD guru Timothy Leary. *Reports from Reuters and AP*

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Marcos mansion gets relief from power bills

LAOAG CITY—The Marcoses did not only get a long grace period for their overdue electric bills; they will also enjoy a relief from paying the account's surcharges as requested by former first lady Imelda Marcos.

For two years now, the Marcoses have failed to update their bill payments for their Batac ancestral mansion, known in its account name as the Batac White House.

The Marcos compound also houses a museum and a mausoleum where the frozen remains of the late strongman Ferdinand Marcos are kept.

The Batac White House account covers the electric service to the mausoleum and to the Marcos mansion. The office of Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, located at the groundfloor of the Marcos museum, has a separate meter, which is being paid promptly.

The account, now amounting to P706,120, represents the accumulated bills from June 2000 to October this year, records obtained from the Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative showed.

The account's principal bill is only P497,250 but surcharges amounting to P208,870 have padded it to P706,120.

"We have talked to Mrs. Marcos and she indicated her willingness to pay the account in full provided we condone the surcharges," Romillas Pascual, Inec general manager, said.

Pascual said the Inec management and its board of directors are inclined to heed Mrs. Marcos' request in deference to the late president.

"We have to consider the late president's contributions to the rural electrification. He is in fact acknowledged as the father of rural electrification," Pascual said.

Based on the statement of accounts covering the period June 2000 to October 2002, the Marcoses paid P10,000 in August 2000 when their power consumption was still a little over P46,000.

No other payments have been made since then. The Marcos compound consumes power ranging from P10,000 to P27,000 monthly.

According to Pascual, the bills piled up because company collectors failed to serve the account statements to Mrs. Marcos who is based in Manila. The Marcos widow, apparently, shoulders the bills to the Marcos compound.

Mrs. Marcos and Inec officials were set to sit down for a conference last Nov. 1 to discuss the overdue bills and identify where the notice of payments should be delivered. *Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Customer shall fill out the raffle coupon with Name, Address, Tel. #, Name and Address of Shellane Retail Outlet and Signature.
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There will be three monthly draws:

Monthly Draws	Schedule of Monthly Draws
First	November 29, 2002
Second	January 10, 2003
Third	January 30, 2003

Monthly Draws	Deadline for Submission of Entries
First	November 15, 2002
Second	December 26, 2002
Third	January 15, 2003

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North Metro	- PSPC Valenzuela LPG Depot, Tatalon St., Barrio Ugong, Valenzuela, Metro Manila
Central Metro	- PSPC Pandacan Installation, Jesus St., Pandacan, Manila
South Metro	- PSPC Pandacan Installation, Jesus St., Pandacan, Manila
Southern Tagalog	- PSPC Alaminos LPG Depot, Km. 71 Maharlika Highway, Brgy. San Juan, Alaminos, Laguna
Bicol	- PSPC Pamplona LPG Depot, National Highway, Pamplona,Camarines Sur
Cebu/Bohol	- PSPC Cebu Regional Sales Office, Unit 901, Keppel Center, Cardinal Rosales Ave. cor. Samar Loop, Cebu Business Park, Cebu City
Western Visayas	- PSPC Lapus Installation, La Paz, Iloilo City
Samar/Leyte	- PSPC Anibong LPG Depot, Rawis, Anibong, Tacloban City
North Mindanao	- PSPC Villanueva LPG Depot, PHIVIDEC Compound, Villanueva, Misamis Oriental
South Mindanao	- PSPC Sasa Installation, Sasa, Lutipan Davao City

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SPORTSTV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - LA Lakers vs Boston Celtics, 8:30 a.m. (r - 9 p.m.), Star Sports; NBA Inside Stuff, 8:30 p.m., Star Sports

GOLF: LPGA Tournament of Champions, 9 a.m. (r), ESPN; PGA Tour Championship, 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. (r), Star Sports; Inside the PGA Tour, 12 noon (r - 5 p.m.), Star Sports; This is the PGA Tour, 1 p.m. (r), Star Sports

FIRST GENTLEMAN'S CIRCUIT

Sinfuego still ahead by 1 over Pucay

By Jong Arcano

LIKE a duel of the Highlanders, Richard Sinfuego and Mars Pucay seem to have set up a showdown for territorial control. That is unless a total stranger named Robert Pactolerin gets in the way.

The three shot it out all day yesterday and when the smoke of the battle cleared, a bruised Sinfuego still held on to a one-stroke lead over Pucay with Pactolerin peeling off but not too far behind after the third round of the First Gentleman's Professional Golf Circuit leg at the Canlubang north.

Sinfuego and Pucay, who both honed their skills as amateurs at the same course, matched five-under-par 67s to keep the top two positions at 206 and 207, respectively, but couldn't put away Pactolerin who was at 209 after a 69.

Cassius Casas, who ended a disappointing streak of missed cuts by winning the Sherwood Hills leg two weeks ago, had a 73 that dropped him to a share of 12th with Cesar Ababa (72).

Pucay, who is bidding to end a long title drought since topping the Orchard leg of the 1999 Philip Morris Circuit, said Sinfuego is playing too well that he needs to elevate his game several notches higher for him to win.

Pucay's short game brilliance saw him one putt six of the first nine holes, including three for pars and one of his three birdies came from 30 feet. He had two gimme putts on the 11th and 17th for his 68.

Sinfuego could have done better if not for at least five missed birdie tries from within five feet in the front nine. His back nine binge started with birdies on the 11th and 12th before knocking in a 15-foot putt for an eagle on the 14th. He capped the round with a birdie from five feet on the 17th.

Mabuhay Elite golf today

THE 2002 Philippine Airlines Mabuhay Miles Elite Invitational golf tournament tees off today at Wack Wack, with a field of nearly 300 business executives, company presidents and other high-end frequent flyers of the flag carrier.

The better-than-expected turnout—organizers were counting on just 200 entries—augurs well for the inaugural staging of this event under its new name. The tournament was known as the PAL Mabuhay Club Invitational for the past nine years.

The one-day event is exclusive to members of the airline's newly launched frequent-flyer program "Mabuhay Miles" who belong to the Elite and Premier Elite categories—the select circle of PAL's First and Business Class frequent flyers.

Confirmed players include captains of business and industry such as Pilipinas Shell chairman Oscar Reyes, Basic Consolidated chairman and president Oscar de Venecia, Wellex Group chairman William Gatchalian, Philippine National Bank president Francisco Dizon, DHL Philippines chair Rodolfo Feliciano and president Jose Feliciano.

The event is sponsored by Airbus Industrie and Boeing, and supported by DHL Worldwide, Express Philippines Corp., Singapore Petroleum Company and HSBC.

Luxury cars donated by Toyota Motors and Audi/Auto Prominence Corp., plus a round-trip first-class ticket to Los Angeles are the hole-in-one prizes.

Thailand beach volleybelles enter finals

CLARK, Pampanga—With the absence of powerhouse China, Thailand shone mightily as it sent both of its teams to the finals of the First Clark Centennial Cup Asian women's beach volleyball championship yesterday at the Clearwater Country Club here.

Kamolthip Kuna and Juranee Sanok of Thailand 2 bounced back from a first set loss to subdue the Indonesian I tandem of Yudahni Ni Puti and Nurjanah Sitti, 20-22, 21-13, 15-8, in the semifinals.

In contrast, Thailand I composed of Manatsanan Pangka and Arlaisuk Ratanaporn needed 26 minutes to brush aside the challenge of Emerita Arisanti and Ninik Nuraida, 21-10, 21-8, in the other half of the Final Four. *Dennis U. Eroa*

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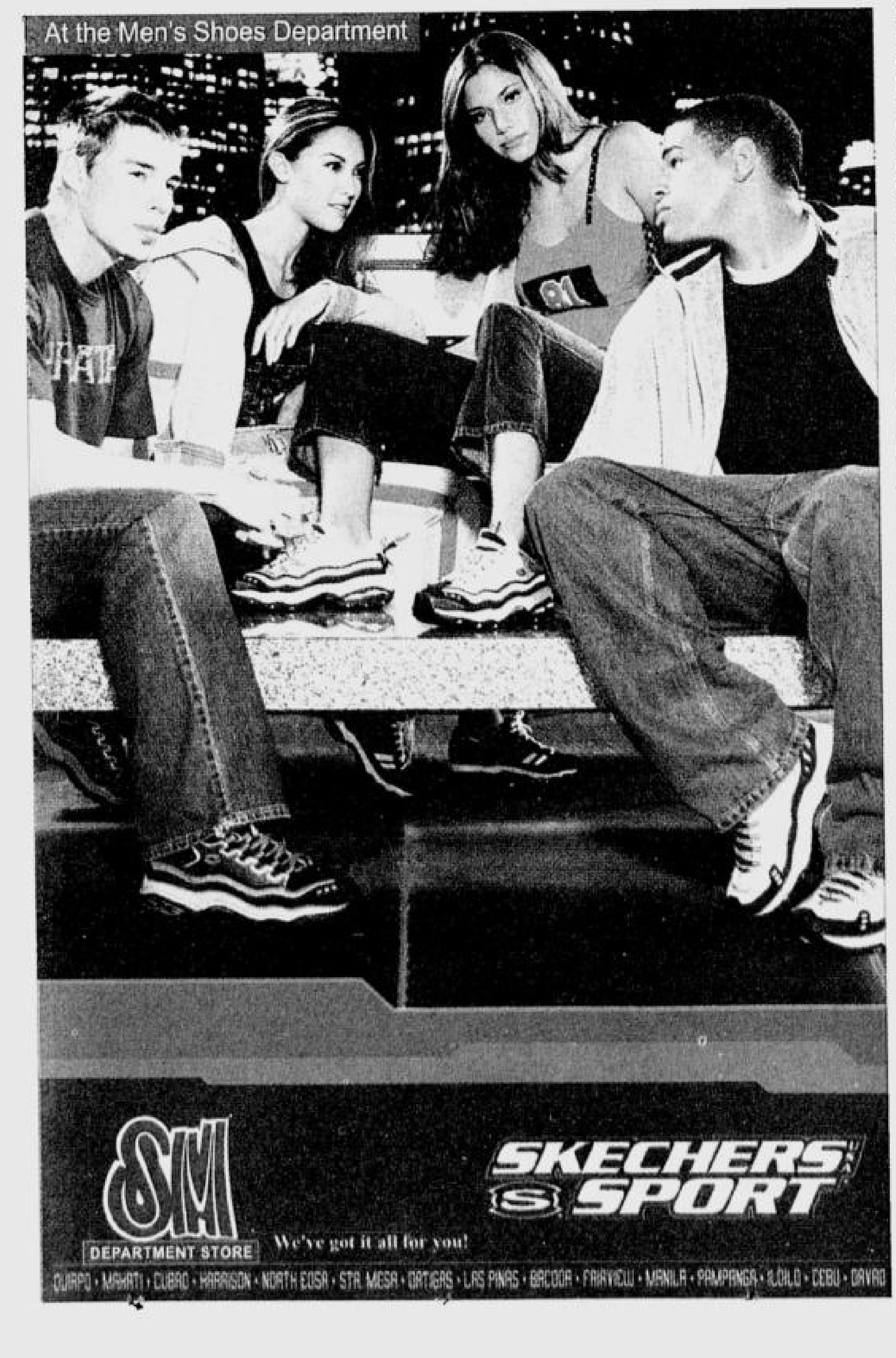
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Sta. Lucia Tour at Alta Vista on

CEBU—It's the most crucial leg for all the teams and nobody wants a victory more than host Alta Vista Golf and Country Club as the 2002 Sta. Lucia Tour resumes with the Visayas stage today and tomorrow.

The biggest roster ever for the Sta. Lucia Tour has come in full force to Cebu hoping to help their respective teams stay in the fight for the Sta. Lucia Cup, the trophy given to the club with the highest winning percentage in the series.

The Visayans' huge delegation is headed by its "A" team made up of Montito Garcia, Carl Almario, Dennis Canoy and Edito Tirol who will be eyeing a revenge against their tormentors from Davao in the first leg.

Backing the tour as major sponsors are Unirock Corp., Readycon and TaylorMade adidas. Minor sponsors are Gainers Marketing, Kubota, Omega, Kodak, Philippine Airlines, Cebu Pacific while Yamaha and Callaway are the hole-in-one prize providers. Hyatt (Manila), Marco Polo (Davao) and Cebu Plaza are the official hotels.

SPORTSWATCH

Monica-Venus set

LOS ANGELES—Monica Seles fought off seven match points to claim a 3-6, 7-6, 6-3 comeback win over Lindsay Davenport on Wednesday and a place in the quarterfinals of the $3 million WTA championships. Waiting for Seles in the next round is second seed Venus Williams, who made a winning return to the Championships after missing the last two due to injury, dismissing Switzerland's Patty Schnyder, 6-2, 7-6. Williams, the winner of seven titles this season, and Seles have clashed in two other quarterfinals this year, Venus coming out on top both times at the French and US Opens. *Reuters*

Diego appeal nixed

NAPLES, Italy—A Naples court Wednesday rejected Wednesday an appeal over the payment of 28 million euros (US$28 million) in back taxes and interest from retired soccer great Diego Armando Maradona. Maradona's tax case dates to a five-year period in the late '80s, when the Argentine played with Serie A team Napoli. The appeal was made by a group of nearly 100 lawyers, legal advisers and commercial law experts—all self-proclaimed fans of Maradona—who have volunteered to defend the former player. The defense committee is led by renowned Neapolitan lawyer Vincenzo Maria Siniscalchi. *AP*

Pick 6 bettor probed

NEW YORK—The probe into a suspicious Breeders' Cup bet worth $3 million includes a third former student at Drexel University. The latest person under investigation by the New York State Racing and Wagering Board is Glen DaSilva of New York, several racing industry officials speaking on the condition of anonymity confirmed Wednesday. Two others under investigation have already been identified — Derrick Davis of Baltimore, the man who made the winning Pick Six bets, and Chris Harn, an employee of Autotote, a company involved in the wagers under suspicion. Harn was fired by Autotote last week. *AP*

RACING TIPS

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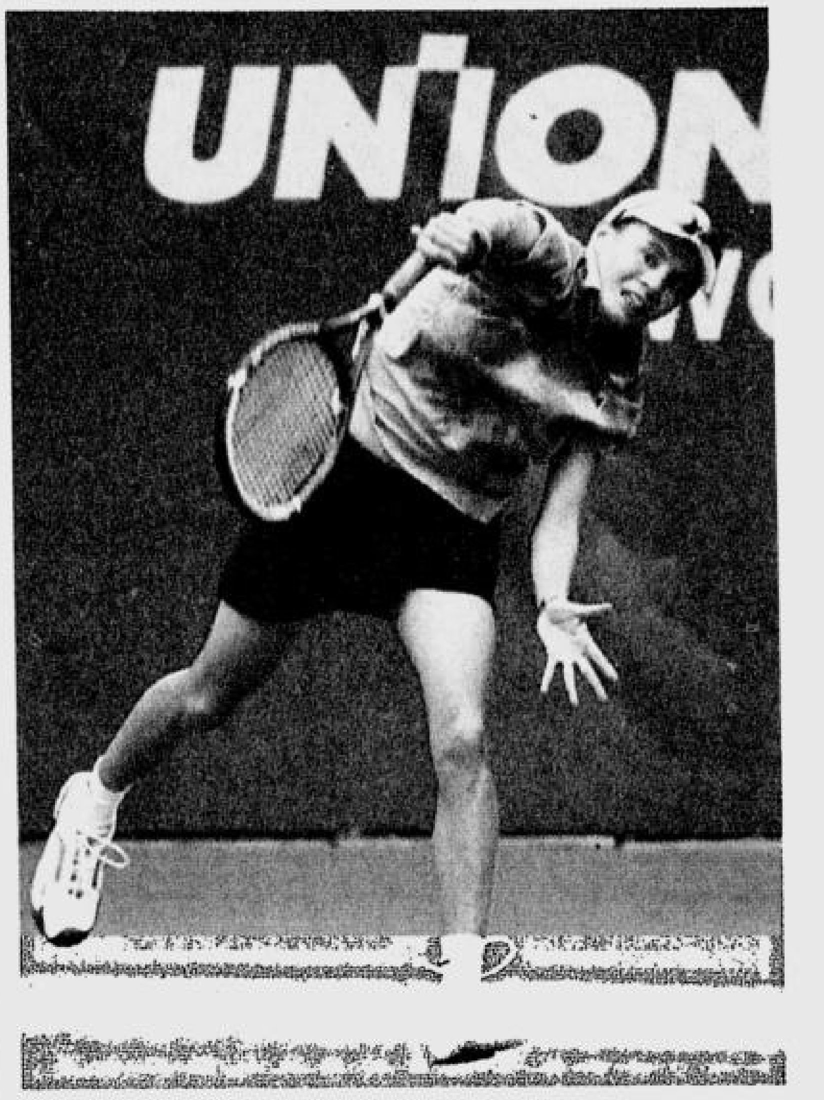
Race 5–1. Jahard 2. Master Sherwin 3. Top Star
Race 6–1. Voice of Destiny 2. Raise D Sun 3. Santa Fe 4. Mega Money
Race 7–1. Exchange Deal 2. King of Arabia/Secret Quest 3. Modern Classic 4. Parola Sunrise 5. Palachik
Race 8–1. Nag-Iisang Ikaw 2. Island King 3. Rain Check
Race 9–1. Lady Darinda 2.Pabuya 3. Vice on Ice 4. El Magnifico 5. Pep Up 6. Hong Kong Treasures



CHIN-BEE Khoo of Malaysia slams a shot against Gabriela Velasco-Andreu of Spain during the second set of their match in the Union Cement/ITF-Phi Women's Circuit I at the Rizal Memorial tennis court yesterday. Khoo won, 6-1, 6-2. ROMY HOMILLADA

Uzbek, Malaysian netters gain q'finals

UZBEKISTAN Federation Cup team member Akgul Amanmuradova banked on a steady baseline game to reach the quarterfinals of the US$10,000 Union Cement-ITF Philippines Women's Circuit 1 at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center yesterday.

The world's No. 812, Amanmuradova, an 18-year-old native of Tashkent, scored a 6-3, 6-3 victory over Chinese Zhang Yao to advance against second seed and Malaysia national player Chin Bee Khoo.

Khoo, ranked No. 571 in the world, stamped her class over Gabriela Velasco-andreau of Spain, 6-1, 6-2.

"It was tough match. I was trailing 0-3 in the first set but I fought back to win. I just kept my focus in the second set to win the match," said Amanmuradova, who is playing for the first time in the Philippines. She was runner-up in the US$10,000 tournament in Hyderabad in India two months ago and was a semifinalist both in the singles and doubles in the US$10,000 Mysore event early this year.

"I never played Khoo before but I watched her match and she's a very good player. She has played more tournaments and has a better world ranking. I will try my best," said Amanmuradova, ranked No. 3 in her country.

PCA listing deadline

REGISTRATION for the men's and women's divisions in the PCA Open Tennis Championships will end at 12 noon tomorrow (Nov. 9).

Players may register with Jeng Antaran and Bobby Mangunay at the PCA clubhouse (tel. 563-8501 loc. 132/113/131). Entry fees are P300 (singles) and P500 (doubles).

The draw for the qualifying and main draw will be held on Nov. 10. Qualifying rounds will run from Nov. 12-15.

Lending support to the P400,000 Open billed as the longest-running and the most prestigious netfest in the country are Dunlop, Accel, Coca Cola, Trans Asia, Las Palmas, Photokina, Equitable-PC, FedEx and Chowking.

Winners will receive P80,000 (men's singles), P30,000 (women's singles), P18,000 (men's doubles) and P8,000 (women's doubles).

Rally Pilipinas tomorrow

IT'S all systems go for the Petron Rally Pilipinas (PRP) this weekend at the vast Subic Remifield parking lot.

Considered as the country's biggest off-road car racing spectacle, the PRP contains two challenging races with the first, set to fire off at noon Saturday (Nov. 9), event organizer Activity Asia Association said yesterday.

This year's PRP battle is expected to be tight. Local drivers led by ace driver Vip Isada and navigator Robbie Hermoso will face two Belgian teams that will carry common racing colors Speedzone and Racing Machines, Seat Ibiza.

Expected to give the locals a stiff challenge in the two-day affair sponsored by Petron Corporation and Petron Blaze in cooperation with Honda Cars Phils., the official car of the event; SBMA, DOT, PAGCOR, Automobile Association of the Phils., Yokohama Tires and Roadwise Motoring School, are Belgium's 1997 Group N champion Peter Desmet and co-driver Franky Beel and 1999 Group I national champions Martin Quartier and navigator Nico Artois.

Spring joins Cebu invt'l cagefest

REIGNING national champion Spring Cooking Oil will see action in the CBL (Cebu Basketball League) Invitational Cup tournament on Nov. 10-16 at the Cebu Coliseum in Cebu City.

"It's a big opportunity for the boys to be able to pit their skills against some of the best teams in the country," said Spring team owner Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla, who is also the national pistol champion.

Carrying the colors for coach Tito Palma's Spring team are Mar Reyes, Mike Buendia, Rodel Manuel, Yong Garcia, Ricky Ricafuente, Wowie Ybanez, Braulio Lim, Murphy Limbo, Lito Saygo, Theody Habelito, Chris Corbin, Nonie Canuza, Dave Bautista and Tyrone Bautista.

Assisting coach Palma is Ricky Magallanes while the team consultant is seven-time PBA Best Import Bobby Parks.

RP whips Italy, 3-1, in Olympiad

BLED—Eugene Torre earned his first victory in nearly a week as the Philippines came within range of landing in the Top 20 in the 11th round of the 35th Chess Olympiad on Wednesday.

The Philippines whipped Italy, 3-1, as it sustained a four-match climb to collect 25.5 points and share 22nd to 25th places with Lithuania, Sweden and Bangladesh.

Torre repulsed a brewing kingside attack hurled by Michele Godena to win in 38 moves of a Pirc Defense.

Joey Antonio downed Fernando Braga in 38 moves of a Sicilian Defense and Mark Paragua defeated Carlo D' Amore in 57 moves of a Center Game.

Bong Villamayor accounted for the lone setback at the hands of Fabio Bellini in 38 moves of French Defense.

"We are within striking distance of our goal and are ready to make the big jump," said Philippine team captain Samuel Estimo.

Macedonia, which is bannered by supergrandmaster Kiril Georgiev, will test the Philippines' mettle in the 12th round on Thursday.

The women's squad dealt the home team's main crew a big setback when they defeated Slovenia A, 2-1. They have 17 points and are poised between 32nd to 38th place.

Arianne Caoili led the Filipinas with a snappy 44-move triumph in a 44-move King's Indian over Jana Krivec and Beverly Mendoza followed it up with a 34-move conquest of Darja Kaps in a Sicilian Defense.

Kathryn Cruz took her third loss by bowing to Anna Srebrenic in 34 moves of a King's Indian. The Croatians are the Filipinas' next opponent.

Russia leads the men's field with 32 points while Georgia paces the distaff side with 24.5.

Aric named nat'l coach

Roy Luarca

MULTITITLED Aric del Rosario has been appointed head coach of the Philippine men's team tasked to defend its Southeast Asia Basketball Association and Southeast Asian Games cage crowns next year.

Basketball Association of the Philippines secretary general Graham Lim relayed Del Rosario's selection yesterday.

BAP president Tiny Literal and executive vice president Christian Tan endorsed Del Rosario's appointment.

Del Rosario is best known for steering the University of Santo Tomas Growling Tigers to four straight University Athletic Association of the Philippines championships from 1993-96.

He also owns the distinction of steering the Pampanga Dragons to the inaugural title of the defunct Metropolitan Basketball Association in 1998.

By virtue of his achievements, Del Rosario was picked as one of Tim Cone's assistant coaches with the PBA Centennial Team, which placed third in the 1998 Bangkok Asiad.

Lim said Del Rosario's experience and motivational approach will serve the Philippine team a good stead when it bids to retain the Seaba Men's title in April. This tournament, which is likely to be held in Manila, also serves as qualifying to the Asian Basketball Confederation Men's Championship slated in China in September.

Del Rosario's role extends up to December when the Philippines stakes its men's cage crown in the 22nd SEA Games in Vietnam.

According to Lim, Del Rosario will begin conducting tryouts for the national team within this month.

Friday derby makes return

THE REGULAR Friday night derbies return at Pasay City Cockpit with the staging of a 3-cock derby at 7 today. Sagupaan Complexor 3000 and Sagupaan Mite Free are the exclusive sponsors.

At stake is a P150,000 cash prize, according to derby host Mon Torres. Entry fee is P5,500. For submission of entries, participants may contact 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

PBA TV FRANCHISE

'Disappointed but I wish them well'

BOBONG Velez said yesterday he was disappointed over the PBA's rejection of his bid to air the league's games again.

As lead man of Vintage Enterprises, Velez had spent 18 years broadcasting the PBA games and his bid for a comeback had been lauded by the experts in the business.

But in a stunning twist of events, the NBN-IBC partnership won the right to become the TV coveror of Asia's first play-for-pay league starting next year.

The government's victory was considered a major upset.

NBN-4 is chaired by Mia Concio while IBC 13 is headed by Dante Ang, the high-profile publicist of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"I am disappointed that our group was not chosen to be the PBA's broadcasting partner," said Velez. "Nevertheless, we thank the PBA for seriously considering our bid and look forward to working with them in the future."

Concio yesterday said she thanked the "PBA board for the vote of confidence."

Philip Ella Juico, IBC-13 vice chair, also faxed his statement yesterday to the Sports Section on IBC's victory, saying: "IBC hopes to do advocacy ...and we hope to work with all sports lovers and stakeholders and utilize the talents and genius of all those who wish to join us in this enterprise."

Below is Velez's statement:

"Sports has always been my life, from my days as a varsity player in basketball, football, softball and track and field and until I got into the business of sports broadcasting.

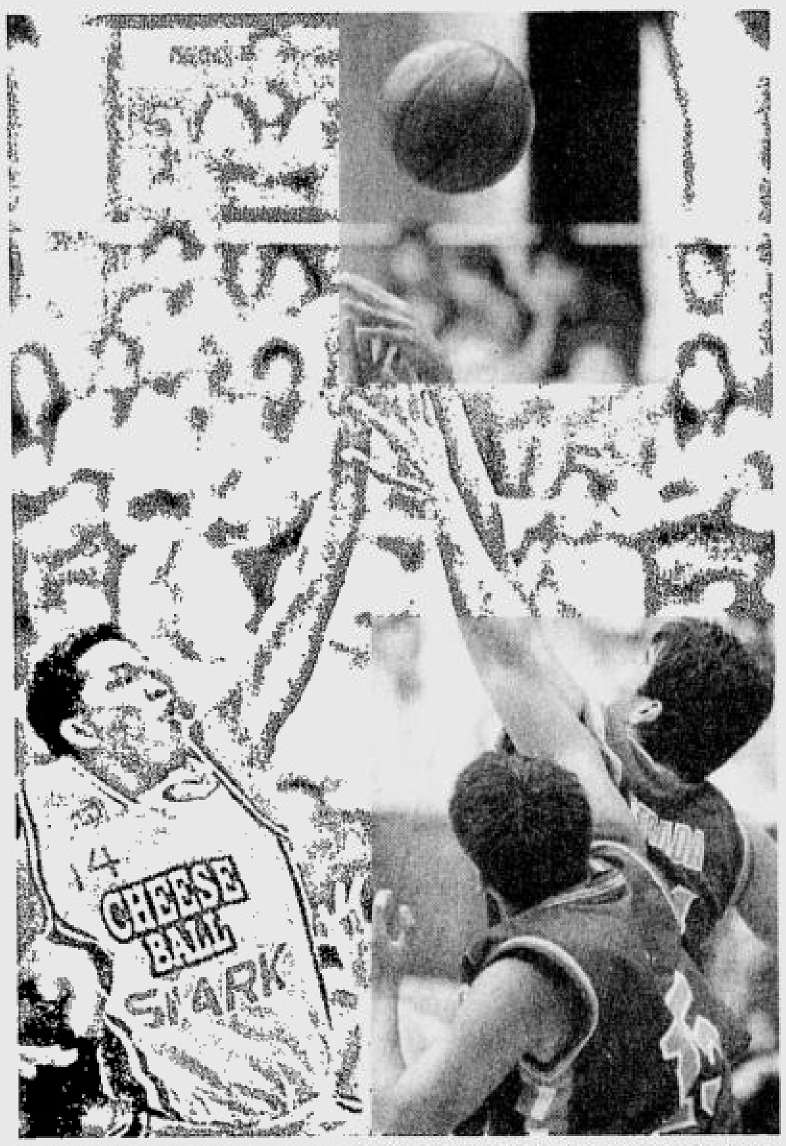
"I spent over 18 years broadcasting the games of the PBA which is a virtual lifetime, especially in this business. "I therefore feel a strong sense of equity in this league.

"I thought I managed to assemble a veritable dream team that would have been the ideal partner for the PBA at this stage of its history. Messrs. Bobby Barreiro, Choy Cojuangco, Joey Concepcion and Butch Jimenez are all well known for being highly successful in their respective fields of endeavor. Mr. Barreiro in particular is a pillar in the broadcasting industry having been instrumental for GMA 7's turnaround.

"I am therefore disappointed that our group was not chosen to be the PBA's broadcasting partner. Nevertheless, we thank the PBA for seriously considering our bid and look forward to working with them in the future.

"We wish them the best of luck." *Al S. Mendoza*

VELEZ



RYSAL Castro (left) of Cheeseballs/Shark battles two players from Sunkist-Pampanga for ball possession during yesterday's PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum. Shark won, 97-74. ROMY HOMILLADA

Shark routs Sunkist; Dazz downs La Salle

GAMES TOMORROW *(Pasig Sports Center)*
2 p.m.—Blu vs LBC
4 p.m.—Montaña vs John O

By Marc Anthony Reyes

CHEESEBALLS/Shark showcased its newly upgraded firepower yesterday, bombing hapless Sunkist-Pampanga, 97-74, to launch its campaign in the PBL Challenge Cup at the Makati Coliseum.

With new recruits Stephen Padilla hitting six of his 10 three-point attempts and Topex Robinson running the fastbreaks with flair, the Cheeseballs had an easy time disposing off the Juicers who never really got into the game.

From the first four minutes when Cheeseballs/Shark posted a 28-18 lead on a slam dunk by Ervin Sotto, there was no turning back for the team whose victory sent a chilling message to other teams.

On his way to the pressroom, head coach Jing Ruiz got congratulated by fellow mentors who cited the squad's depth.

But Ruiz was quick to point out that his team still needs to play in harmony, considering that Padilla and Robinson barely had two weeks of practice with the team.

"Maybe they really want to make their presence felt," said Ruiz of his two new additions.

Coming off the bench, Padilla, who played for the Cebu Gems in the defunct Metropolitan Basketball Association, scored 22 points, most of them from the outside which put the Sunkist defense in disarray.

Robinson also provided superb back-up job for Warren Ybañez, making nine points, nine assists, five rebounds, four steals and triggering most of the Cheeseballs' 22 fastbreak points.

Dazz Dishwashing defeated Mike Cortez-less La Salle-ICTSI, 81-73, in the second game.

CHEESEBALLS/SHARK 97— Padilla 22, Ortega 17, Castro 13, Robinson 9, Ybañez 7, Epondulan 7, Sanz 6, Sotto 4, Omolon 4, Coching 2, Mendoza 2, Basilides 2, Abadia 2, Junio 0, Magsumbol 0.

SUNKIST-PAMPANGA 74—Wilson 14, Omiping 10, Cordero 9, Estrada 9, Tan 8, Booker 7, Hubalde 6, Masbang 5, Alminario 4, Mejia 2, Butel 0, Santos 0.

Quarters: 15-11, 45-31, 67-51, 97-74

NBA COMPLETE RESULTS

Dallas 106, Toronto 92; Washington 107, Cleveland 100; New York 95, Sacramento 88; Philadelphia 101, LA Clippers 99 (OT); Boston 91, Chicago 69; New Orleans 86, Seattle 84; Phoenix 93, Atlanta 88; Detroit 80, Utah 78; Milwaukee 99, New Jersey 93; Portland 94, Memphis 88. AFP

Governors relax at Southwoods

By June Navarro

THE PBA Board of Governors, headed by Francisco "Butch" Alejo, went on a golfing holiday yesterday at the Manila Southwoods in Carmona, Cavite.

The golf trip, hosted by Talk N Text team owner Manny Pangilinan, came after the board, which had gone through months of brainstorming, awarded the exclusive broadcasting rights of the PBA to government-owned stations National Broadcasting Network and Intercontinental Broadcasting Corporation on Wednesday.

Alejo said the board will name the commissioner of its choice by the end of November at the earliest.

PBA commissioner Jun Bernardino, who is due to retire at the end of the year, had strongly endorsed his deputy--PBA executive director Sonny Barrios--as the best man for the job but the board opted to consider more names for the post.

Besides Barrios, the board also floated the names of Chito Narvasa, Rey Gamboa, Noli Eala and Elmer Yanga as contenders.

Recently, Ramon Fernandez and Chito Loyzaga, past commissioners of the defunct Metropolitan Basketball Association, were also thrown into the selection arena.

GAMES TODAY
(Cuneta Astrodome)
5:30 p.m.--Alaska vs FedEx
7:30 p.m.--Coca-Cola vs Ginebra

Auto Track Day slated Sunday

ANOTHER red-letter day awaits motorsports enthusiasts when the much-awaited BRC-Ambi Pur Auto Track Day comes off the wraps on Nov. 10 at the Batangas Racing Circuit in Barangay Maligaya, Rosario, Batangas.

More than 80 participants from different auto clubs in the country are expected to see action in the whole-day event also supported by Standard Insurance, Pegasus, Red Horse and Philippine Auto Sports Council through Boy Ochoa and Mark Ablaza.

BRC track manager Zaldy Sotto Rodriguez said members of the Toyota Auto Club, BMW, Mercedes Benz Club, Manila Sports Car Club Mini Cooper, Club 30, Nissan Bayan and Volkswagen Club have confirmed their participation in the unique motorsports event.

"Everything is now ready. It will truly be a red-letter day for all motorsports enthusiasts," said Rodriguez, who is organizing the event with the aim of promoting friendship and camaraderie among drivers and educating auto club members on the proper way of driving in the racetrack.

Spicing up the event is the Pegasus-sponsored bikini competition later in the day.

For inquiries, call Rodriguez at tel. 817-2241 or 0917-4779700.

SPORTSWATCH

Torre institute goes to Davao

THE GRANDMASTER Eugenio Torre Chess Institute (Getci) will conduct a chess seminar-workshop in Davao and Socsargen provinces on Nov. 17, Sunday, at 1 p.m. during the Philippine Bookfair Davao at the 2nd Floor, Marketing Activity Area, SM City Davao, Quimpo Boulevard, Ecoland, Davao City. A 10-board simultaneous exhibition will follow at 3 p.m. The activity is being organized in coordination with the Active Chess Center of Asia (Acca) and supported by Belgosa Media Systems. Interested elementary and high school students in Davao and Socsargen may contact Rico Arnold M. Oñare at 298-0561/299-27775 or the Getci at 892-8759 or e-mail at acca@info.com.ph for details.

Milo Checkmate Saturday

A SECOND batch of enrollees for the sixth series of Milo Checkmate Saturday clinic will be accepted until tomorrow at the following venues: St. Benedict College (SBC) in Alabang Hills, Muntinlupa City; Rizal Memorial Sports Complex (RMSC), Vito Cruz, Manila and at the Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan. Clinic at SBC will start from 8-11:30 a.m. at the HS student lounge; at RMSC 9 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium former manager's office; and 2:30-6:30 p.m. at the GSC fishing wharf near Virra Mall. The chessfest is open to kids who are 5-18 years old. Enrollees are advised to proceed to the venue site of their choice at least 30 minutes before the clinic starts. For details, call the MCC at 826-8560 and 0916-852-1069.

Don Bosco booters advance

BACOLOD CITY—Defending champion Don Bosco Technical Institute blasted Handumanan National High, 16-0, Wednesday to advance to the quarterfinals of the Negros Occidental Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football tournament at the USLS field here. Jason Asparen knocked in five goals, Christopher Darmstader had four and Francis John Liza and Larry Jade Pun-an chipped in three each as DBTI swept its three Group A elimination assignments.

3rd Argo Cup golfest Nov. 29

The 3rd Argo Cup Invitational Golf Tournament will tee off at 8 a.m. on Friday, Nov. 29, at the Mt. Malarayat Golf & Country Club in Lipa City, Batangas. This annual fund-raising event is hosted by the Tau Alpha Foundation Inc. (TAFI), the alumni organization of the Tau Alpha Fraternity of the U.P. College of Engineering. Proceeds of this year''s fund-raiser will go to the establishment of the Cristy Hernandez Professorial Chair which will be awarded to the most deserving faculty member of the U.P. College of Engineering in Diliman. This year''s major sponsors are Globe Wireless, Caltex Philippines Inc. and San Miguel Corporation. Interested parties may contact Dax Balbastre at tel. 421-1195 to 98.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1996, the Philippines scooped 14 medals, including 5 golds, to finish second overall in the 4th Southeast Asian Taekwondo Championships in Ho Chi Minh City.

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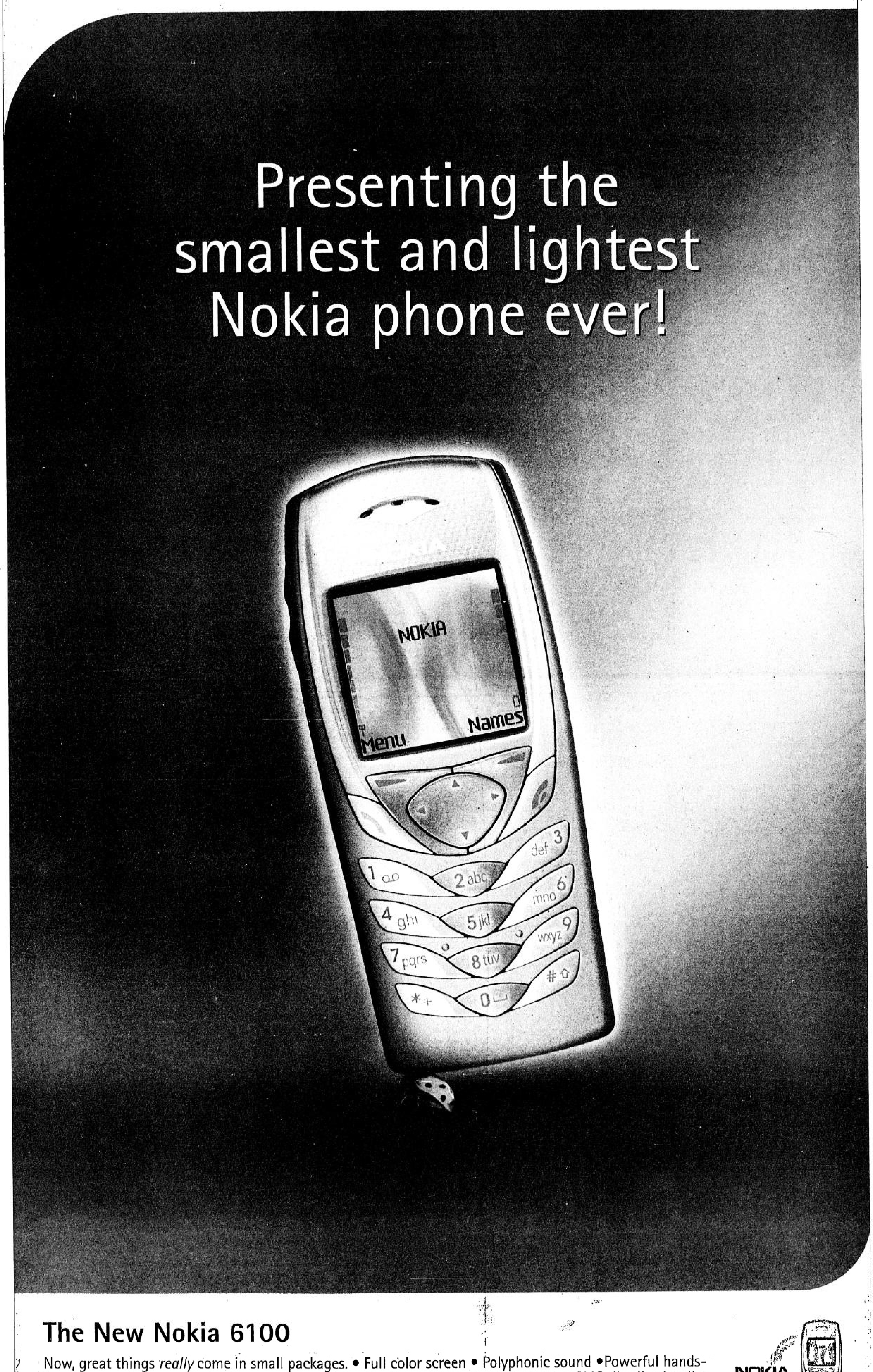
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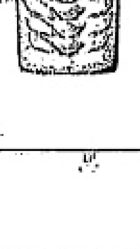

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Metro mayors rally round Fernando

By Christian V. Esguerra and Leila Salaverria

METRO Manila mayors yesterday came to the rescue of Bayani Fernando after a congressman threatened to abolish the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

Pasay Mayor Wenceslao Trinidad, the mayors' spokesperson, slammed Valenzuela Rep. Magtanggol "Magi" Gunigundo for threatening to either cut the MMDA's P2-billion budget by half or abolish the agency.

"He should look around, walk along the sidewalks, or take Edsa," Trinidad advised Gunigundo. "He'll notice many concrete improvements under Fernando's term."

The MMDA chair himself denied allegations that he misspent the agency's P2-billion budget and has done nothing but propaganda "at the expense of the people."

Fernando yesterday said that he is willing to answer whatever questions Rep. Gunigundo may have about the MMDA's budget.

"He just wants clarification," Fernando said of Gunigundo. "We will try our best to explain (how we spent the budget) to his (Gunigundo's) satisfaction."

But the MMDA chair added he would prefer that explanations be made at the congressional hearings.

"Why not wait for the hearing?" he asked. "It's premature (to comment) now."

Fernando also belied Gunigundo's claim that the MMDA is doing nothing but propaganda.

The MMDA chair said there are two kinds of propaganda—the political and the developmental—and what he is doing is the second kind.

"My propaganda is for the promotion of a legitimate program," he said. "It is needed, for how can you promote a program without propaganda?"

Fernando added that the government is not spending for the MMDA's propaganda because he himself is involved in it.

"I myself am trying hard to be an actor," he said. "The government is not spending anything. I have no talent fee."

He was referring to his soon to be launched TV show on the National Broadcasting Network.

During the weekly meeting at the MMDA office yesterday, the mayors made a vote of confidence on Fernando's leadership.

"There's no ulterior motive behind (Fernando's) actions," Trinidad said. "(Fernando) is just an ordinary worker, so instead of criticizing him, we should all support him."

Gunigundo, who has long been calling for the abolition of the MMDA, wants Fernando to explain how his agency spent its P2-billion budget.

Should he succeed in abolishing the MMDA, the lawmaker wants to replace it with the National Capital Region Development Council (NCRDC), a coordinating body without a budget.

Trinidad said Gunigundo should not zero in on Fernando because the former Marikina mayor has been MMDA chair for some months.

The proposed NCRDC, the mayor claimed, would "die a natural death since no agency can survive without a budget."

Fernando also told reporters that Gunigundo was mistaken about the MMDA's alleged mass hiring of personnel and the acquisition of firearms.

"What mass hiring? We have removed a lot of MMDA personnel," he said.

He later added that the MMDA has not bought any firearms.

Around two thousand contractual employees of the MMDA earlier had been restless after Fernando ordered a review of their contracts to determine who would stay on at the agency.

He had later said that some employees would definitely have to go because they are not performing well.

On Wednesday, Gunigundo was quoted as saying the the MMDA's budget is "too much for an agency without tangible accomplishments."

The Valenzuela representative also criticized the plan to arm barangay watchmen as a measure against terrorists, and hit Fernando's threat to pour kerosene on sidewalk vendors' goods.

Shortly after stepping in as MMDA chair, Fernando implemented a hard-nosed sidewalk clearing campaign that had earned him the ire of urban poor groups and sidewalk vendors.

Month-old boy dies after being fed expired milk

By Leila B. Salaverria

A MONTH-OLD boy died after his mother allegedly fed him milk that was past its expiration date.

Reports showed that Johnrey Cardenas died on Nov. 1 at around 8:45 a.m. after drinking Nestogen milk.

The baby also allegedly vomited and had diarrhea after drinking the milk.

The baby's mother Elena, 37, of Pallar Village, Barangay Southside in Makati City, went to the police Wednesday afternoon to complain about her son's death, which she believed was due to the powdered milk she brought from a store in Pasig City.

She told police that the two cans of Nestogen milk she bought bore "best before" dates of April 2002 and October 2002.

SPO4 Leonardo Timtiman, head of the Homicide Division of the Makati police, said they would ask permission from the Cardenas couple to exhume the baby's body for autopsy.

Makati policemen are also set to get Cardenas' statement on the death of her son.

Timtiman said Cardenas had earlier gone to the Pasig police to complain about the store that allegedly sold her the expired milk formula.

Timtiman said the police might invite the store owner for questioning because expired goods are not supposed to be sold.

Cardenas turned over the two cans of Nestogen milk to the Makati police.

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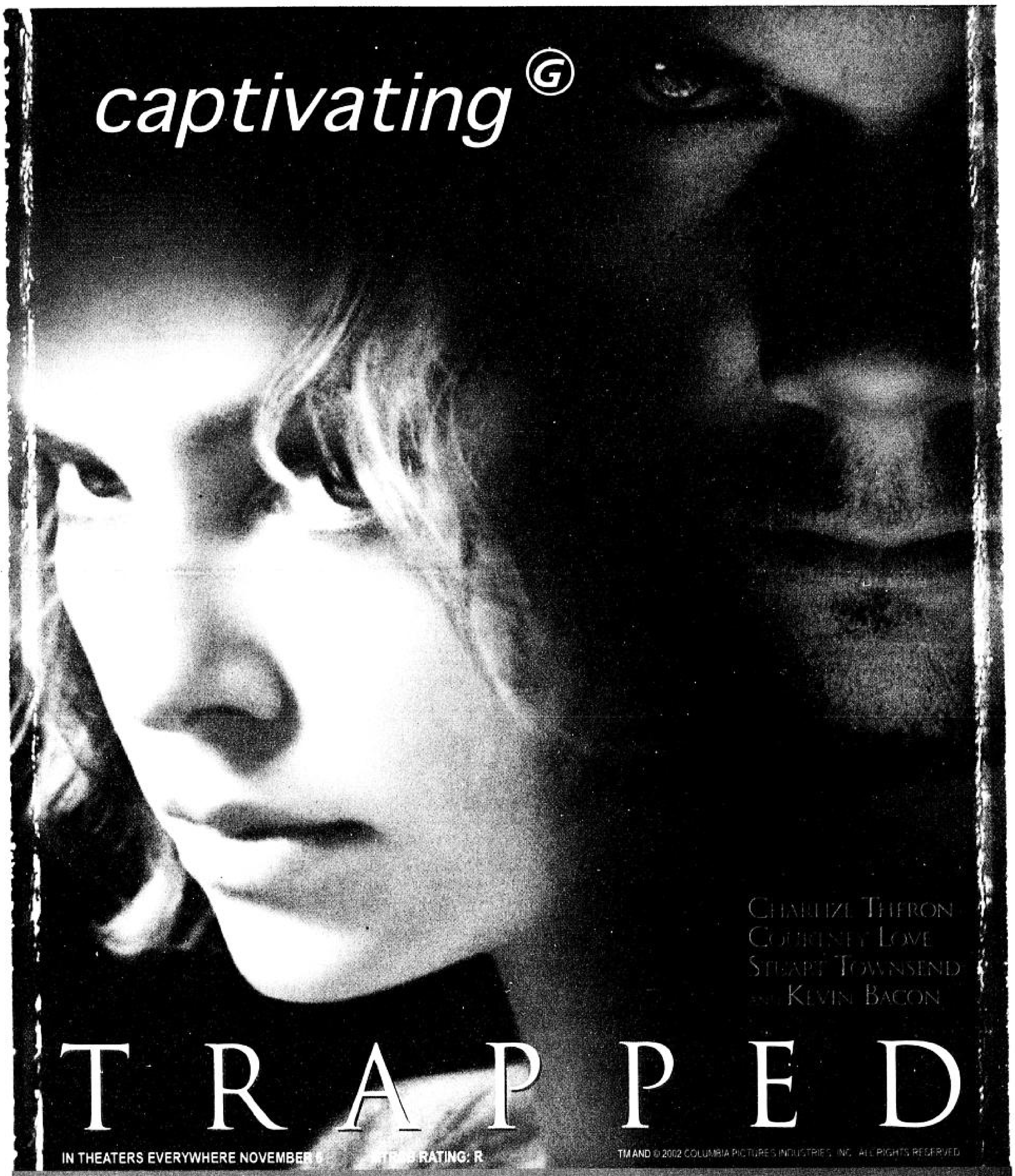

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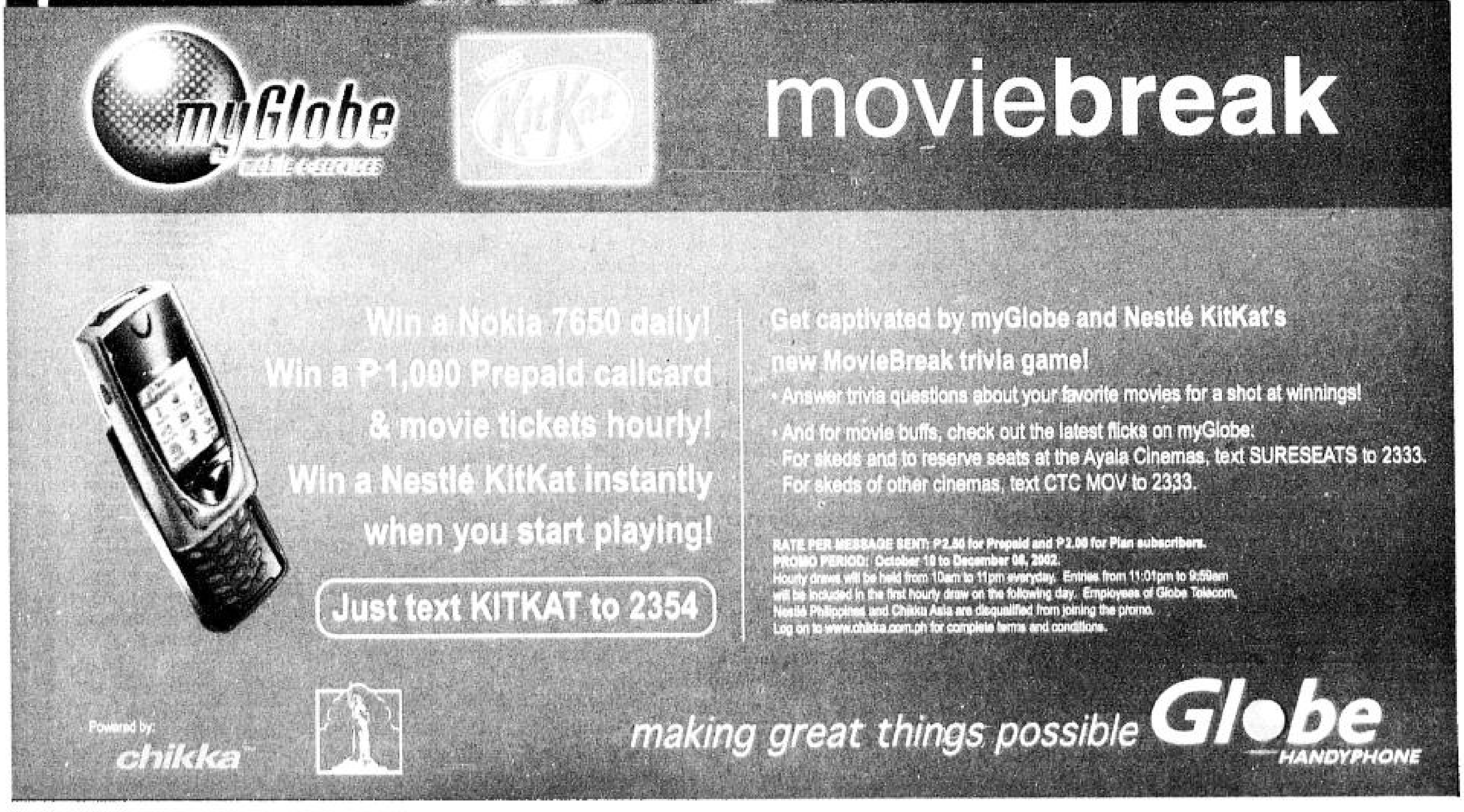

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Tondo councilors slam Noli de Castro

By Jerome Aning

COUNCILORS from Manila's Tondo district are mad at Sen. Noli de Castro for allegedly implying in his weekly television program that Tondo is a crime haven and home to the "scum of society."

In a privilege speech on Tuesday, Councilor Arlene Koa of the 1st district said the senator apparently did not know that Tondo is "now peaceful."

Koa said that De Castro, in his program Magandang Gabi Bayan last Oct. 26, featured the high crime rate in the Quezon City barangays Holy Spirit and Commonwealth, which he called "New Tondos."

Koa and another Tondo councilor, Isko Moreno, said the senator did not have the right to make such a sweeping comparison and should have first looked into the "present conditions" of the district.

The aldermen said the crime rate in Tondo, home to many urban poor and middle-class residents, has greatly decreased with the help of the police and barangay authorities, and the cooperation of residents themselves.

In the '60s, '70s and early '80s, Tondo earned the reputation of being a "no-man's land" due to its high crime rate.

Crime gangs preying on city folks and businesses also made Tondo their "hideout" and "base of operation."

The 12 councilors representing Tondo in the Council are considering whether to demand an apology from the senator and label him "persona non grata" in Manila if they are not satisfied with his reply.

DE CASTRO

NIDA DEATH ANNIVERSARY

They'll keep on waiting

By Philip Tubeza and Marinel Cruz

KAYE Torres, daughter of the slain actress Nida Blanca, did not bother to hide her disappointment yesterday when she marked the first anniversary of her mother's murder.

"It has been a year since she died, but the people who murdered her are still out there," Torres said. "That is not a reason to feel happy."

Wearing a "Justice for Nida" T-shirt, Torres said she feels frustrated with the way the National Bureau of Investigation has been carrying on the murder investigation.

And NBI officials agree with her, saying that the wheels of justice have been grinding slowly for the slain actress.

But NBI spokesperson Ricardo Diaz said he is optimistic that in the end, the real persons behind the murder will be punished.

"Everyone is feeling impatient (over the tedious judicial process), but if the delay (in the case) is due to the observance of due process, then it is a reasonable delay," Diaz said.

According to Torres, she can do nothing about the delay.

"I understand (the NBI officials) are doing what they can, and I'm willing to wait," Torres said. "I know deep in my heart that justice will still prevail."

Torres, members of her family and close friends yesterday attended a church service to mark Blanca's death anniversary at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit in Loyola Memorial, Marikina City.

Kaye Torres, daughter of the slain actress Nida Blanca, attends a church service at the Loyola Memorial Chapel in Marikina to mark the anniversary of her mother's death. Torres is flanked by actors Nestor de Villa and Dolphy.

JOAN BONDOC

During the service, Fr. Bong Cabrera offered what hope he could to the family and friends of the slain actress.

"Rise above the pain of your loss," Fr. Cabrera told the people. "Nida's story must not end in Calvary but in Resurrection."

After the Mass, Torres proceeded to Blanca's grave, where she offered a short prayer before she laid white roses on her mother's grave.

After the mass, actress Nova Villa said she and other close friends never stopped praying for Blanca's soul.

"Up to now, we still ask ourselves, 'Why her?'" Villa said. "She does not deserve such a violent death."

Comedian Dolphy, real name Rodolfo Quizon, also asked the NBI to speed up its investigation.

"I hope they will give this case the attention it needs," Quizon said. "It's taking (the NBI) too long to solve the case." Quizon starred alongside Blanca in the long-running comedy sitcom "John En Marsha."

Torres said she is scheduled to meet the NBI to discuss new information about her mother's case.

"I'm hoping that the new pieces of evidence will help solve the crime," she said.

On July 17, the NBI charged Blanca's husband Rod Lauren Strunk, Philip Medel Jr., Vicente Polinar, a John Doe and a "lesbian-looking" Jane Doe as principals in the Blanca murder case.

"We are very positive (about the case)," Diaz said. "The case will be filed in court. The arrest warrants will then be issued and the extradition process (against Rod Strunk) will finally start."

Does Erap still hold the key?

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THE PLACE where they keep the deposed president from public view is officially classified as a hospital suite. It's more of a garage, big as a college schoolroom, squarish.

There's an air of quiet anxiety.

A gleaming figure of the Sto. Niño, tall as a jumbo soft drink bottle and draped in golden tapestry, stands watch like an all-seeing presence from the makeshift altar.

Next to the holy image, a wide, flat-screened television set is the most imposing fixture in the room.

Of course, the most startling presence is , Erap Estrada, good-looking, trimmer than usual, skin light and clear.

It's just another day in his detention, but Mr. Estrada, in a handsome pink-salmon shirt and light green slacks, does not look a bit like a detainee. Erap, his cheeks pinkish, actually appears ready and raring to walk into the set and shoot a scene in yet another movie.

***

The air-conditioned garage now appears like it has been converted into an ice cream parlor. Round plastic park tables, with corresponding set of white chairs, are in place to accommodate the regular flow of visitors.

People come and go, drawing sustained attention from the main detainee.

But a visitor will have to pass through a total of three heavily guarded checkpoints—the main entry, the main gate and the final entry to the room—before reaching the former President's detention suite.

He does not look the role. But when Erap finally settles in one chair and starts talking his line, he finally appears irrevocably imprisoned.

He's not even allowed to peep outside the room, Erap explains.

He's not complaining and, in fact, appears amused at what he calls a very strange situation.

**

It's a chance visit for this reporter, who got the invitation after a mutual friend called Erap by phone from Davao following Manny Pacquiao's sensational defense of his world boxing crown.

It's just a friendly call, but over merienda, talk inevitably strays on various topics—old times, sports, people, miscues, regrets, what-might-have-been, the political situation.

And what surfaces in the over two hours of easy exchange is a detainee with a sharp memory, a heart for the poor and who's endlessly alarmed at the current state of affairs in the country.

He names the place where he last met this visitor—at the wake of Capt. Adelio Cruz, a Korean war hero and his trusted compadre.

He readily ticks off the name of a beer place—Aroma— one of his old haunts on old Azcarraga, near the old Vista Theater, a detail which has eluded National Artist Nick Joaquin and many other friends.

Yes, he still finds time to cook but only on very special occasions, he says. On the whole, he and his son Jinggoy, detained in an adjacent room, get their regular food ration from their kitchen in San Juan.

Does he keep bacalao immersed in water for 24 hours before cooking?

Of course not, he protests vehemently, just overnight, otherwise it would completely lose its saltiness. ("Hindi na bacalao `yun kung walang alat.")

***

Manny Pacquiao is our sportsman of the hour, but his top favorite is still Efren Bata Reyes, who, Erap says, would call him up before and after a foreign tournament. A nice, natural and very sincere fellow, Erap says of The Magician.

He says he also likes Djanggo Bustamante, smart and with the bearing and brilliance of a born star.

Another Manny, Governor Pinol of North Cotabato, tops Erap's list of courageous and efficient officials from the South.

The detained former chief of state however shrugs his shoulder and takes a deep puff at his unfiltered stick of Luckies when asked if Ronnie Zamora, his former executive secretary who must've enjoyed another salad season during Erap's tenure in Malacañang, has ever called up or paid him a visit.

Without saying it, he hints he has had more than his share of cheap, fair-weather friends.

***

Of course, there were things he regrets greatly. Like what he claims was his failure to complete his reform program.

He claims success in containing the Mindanao situation after he waged an all-out war against rebels in the area.

He claims kidnappings and other forms of criminality were more or less under control, until he was impeached.

He says they were well on their way to crushing the NPA rebellion but this too was cut short following his ouster from office.

He also speaks of a blue print and a total battle plan against corruption.

Oh, the national situation would not have been this bad if he were still in reign, Erap swears.

Today, Erap professes, everything has gotten out of hand, adding he doubts seriously if any other leader could succeed in restoring order and leading the country back to recovery.

Everything is in a mess, it's to each his own, Erap groans, and what maybe needed is a totally new form of government.

He grits his teeth. He puffs hard at his cigarette.

He did not say it but he seems to say he holds the key.

The main detainee sits staring hard now. He keeps waiting.

Maniac who preyed on three girls, aged 7 to 11, at large

Tina Santos

AUTHORITIES have rescued three young girls, aged 7 and 11, who were turned into sex slaves for a week by their 56-year-old neighbor in Caloocan City, police reported yesterday.

Caloocan City police chief Senior Superintendent Benjardi Mantele identified the suspect as Eleonor Masorante, of Padas Alley, Dagat-dagatan.

He remains at large.

Officer-on-case PO1 Ma. Cecilia Mendoza of the local police Women's and Children's Desk said the ordeal of the victims began last Oct. 24, during which the suspect allegedly lured the victims into his house where he later abused them. She added that the latest incident happened last Nov. 1.

Police said the victims' ordeal was only uncovered after the brother of one of the victims saw Masorante again luring the victims into his house, prompting the boy to tell his mother about the incident.

When the mother confronted her daughter to confirm the boy's story, the young victim decided to reveal her ordeal in the hands of the suspect.

As later discovered, Masorante would tie the victims' hands and feet, lay the victims side by side on the floor before abusing them.

The suspect allegedly mashed the private parts of the victims, and inserted his finger into the genitals of the two girls, both aged 7.

Mantele said he has already ordered his men to track down the suspect who has gone into hiding upon learning of the charges filed against him.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, November 8, 2002
31st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Phil 3:17-4:1
Gospel: Lk 16:1-8

Jesus told his disciples, "There was a rich man whose steward was reported to him for fraudulent service. He summoned the steward and asked him: 'What is this I hear about you? I want you to render an account of your service for it is about to be terminated.'

The steward thought to himself: 'What am I to do now? My master will surely dismiss me. I am not strong enough to do hard work, and I am ashamed to beg. I know what I will do: I must make sure that when I am dismissed, there will be some people to welcome me into their house.'

So he called his master's debtors one by one. He asked the first who came: 'How much do you owe my master?' The reply was: 'A hundred jars of oil.' The steward said: 'Here is your bill. Sit down quickly and write there fifty.' To the second he put the same question: 'How much do you owe?' The answer was: 'A thousand bushels of wheat.' Then he said: 'Take your bill and write eight hundred.'

The master commended the dishonest steward for his astuteness. For the people of this world are more astute in dealing with their own kind than are the people of light."

Commentary

When I was at the Minor Seminary, I asked my formator the meaning of this parable. I couldn't understand how Jesus could praise the unjust administrator. Only later on did I understand that Jesus was not praising the injustice but the capacity to deal in the best possible way with the difficult situation he was experiencing. This is one of the favorite topics of Jesus: one must be attentive to the present moment, because what is really possible is now in our hands. That's all we have. Our fidelity to the Gospel is exercised here and now. Precisely because it is now when we have been invited to the banquet.

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—DNA testing—The purpose of DNA testing is to ascertain whether an association exists between the evidence sample and the reference sample. The samples collected are subjected to various chemical processes to establish their profile. The test may yield 3 possible results: (1) The samples are different and therefore must have originated from different sources (exclusion). This conclusion is absolute and requires no further analysis or discussion. (2) It is not possible to be sure, based on the results of the test, whether the samples have similar DNA types (inconclusive). This might occur for a variety of reasons including degradation, contamination or failure of some aspect of the protocol. Various parts of the analysis might then be repeated with the same or a different sample, to obtain amore conclusive result; or (3) The samples are similar, and could have originated from the same source (inclusion). In such a case, the samples are found to be similar, the analyst proceeds to determine the statistical significance of the similarity. [Citations omitted.] [En Banc, Per Curiam, People v. Vallejo, G. R. No. 144656, May 9, 2002] DIGEST BY R. B. VERA

CBMC gathering

THE CHRISTIAN Business Men's Committee in the Philippines will hold its 6th National Convention today and tomorrow at the Christian Development Center in Tagaytay City.

The theme of the gathering is "Revealing Our Vision," where the convenors hope to share Christ's gospel of righteousness with businessmen and professionals.

Those interested in joining may call CBMC-Philippines-Card at 897-1771 and 895-70-61, or e-mail them at cascom ds@edsamail.com.ph.

Petty crimes rising in Metro

By Philip C. Tubeza

WHILE the Manila police are touting their readiness against terrorists, petty crimes are again on the rise in the capital.

On Wednesday afternoon, a Malaya reporter was robbed of her cellular phone in Quiapo.

Regina Bengco, who covers the Malacañang beat and a resident of Sampaloc, Manila, was robbed by two unidentified armed men in their 20s, said a report at the Western Police District-Theft and Robbery Section.

The culprits, armed with a fan knife, took the victim's P4,000 Nokia 5110.

Bengco said she can identify the suspects if she saw them again.

She told investigators that the robbery happened at around 2:15 p.m. under the Quiapo Bridge.

The jeep Bengco was riding was making a turn under the bridge when the suspects announced the holdup.

The culprits told the passengers to surrender their cellular phones even when none of them had displayed their cell phones.

Bengco got a cut in her right thigh when one of the suspects pressed his fan knife against her.

The robbers then escaped on foot after getting her cell phone.

Bengco reported the incident at the WPD headquarters and was told to go to the Sta. Cruz police, which had jurisdiction over the crime-prone area.

The incident happened just a day after Manila Mayor Lito Atienza ordered the WPD to crack down on petty criminals in the city.

The mayor said he received reports that the number of petty crimes in Manila was growing.

In response, the WPD leadership ordered the heads of the Sta. Cruz and Ermita police stations to double their efforts against criminals.

METROBRIEFS

Arrested

Two suspected members of the Akyat Bahay Gang were arrested yesterday by a Quezon City policeman whom the two suspects had burglarized. SPO2 Florante Buenaventura of the Central Police District Novaliches Police Station chanced upon the two suspects inside his home at 32 Masaya St., Novaliches, Quezon City. The suspects were identified as Edwin Pondo, 24, and Antonio Ocampo, 22. Recovered from the suspects were two cellphones, P9,500 in cash, and some home appliances they had planned to steal. ***Alcuin Papa***

Frat victim

A 17-YEAR-OLD out-of-school youth is now in critical condition after he was allegedly shot by one of the seven members of a rival fraternity Wednesday night in Caloocan City. Victim Rodel Veloya, of 10th Street, 8th Avenue, Caloocan, remains under observation at the Manila Central University Hospital for several gunshot wounds he sustained in the body. Only one of the seven suspects was arrested by the authorities, a 17-year-old student and resident of 10th Street, 2nd Avenue, Caloocan said city police chief Senior Supt. Benjardi Mantele. Mantele said he has already ordered his men to conduct follow up operation to track down the arrested suspect cohorts identified only through their aliases Aga, Noncy, Tanda, Piong-piong, Bombay, Pepa and Jeff, all members of Toobao Fraternity. ***Tina Santos***

SLT arrogance hit

THE "ARROGANT" traffic enforcers at the South Luzon Tollways are again in hot water. Johnny Yam, president of Fortune Packaging Corp., has filed a complaint against two traffic officers for allegedly harassing him and his driver over a minor traffic incident at the Bicutan Interchange of the SLT last Oct. 9. In a letter, Yam said the enforcers berated him and his driver after they failed to recognize a "mixed" hand signal for them to stop. After a heated exchange between the driver and one of the officers, another enforcer named Jason Nemes allegedly joined the argument and threatened to confiscate Yam's license plate number. "Both parties had their share of mistakes," Yam wrote the SLT management. "It was embarrassing that my car blocked the exit of the E-Pass lane due to your arrogant traffic enforcers." ***Christian Esguerra***

MANDALUYONG CHILDREN'S CHORUS

Hail RP's singing warriors

2002 Busan Choir Olympics
Singing Together
Brings Nation Together

SINGING ambassadors before the world.

FE LACSAMANA

By Fe Lacsamana

BE careful with your heart. You just might lose it to the Mandaluyong Children's Chorus–33 newly minted heroes who did our country proud in late October with silver and bronze trophies from the prestigious II World Choir Olympics in Busan, Korea.

Competition was predictably cutthroat. The children's category alone, with thirty entries, took the judges three days to sieve. Musica contemporanea had only 11 competitors. Ten were adults but most didn't even make the Olympic qualifier.

The stout-hearted Mandaluyong natives aged 9-16 who made Philippine choral music history are the first Filipinos to reach a silver finish in the children's choir and the bronze in the musica contemporanea, stringing the distinctions on their first competition ever on their first trip abroad.

Add to the herculean achievement the 2002 Catholic Mass Media Awards for best MTV, Only Selfless Love. Plus the fact that they were instrumental in reviving interest in twentieth century music and you get a pretty good picture of the artistic heights MCC scales.

"Until a year ago, nobody was doing contemporary music. *Pwede*. We had a chance against Cantemus, the perennial winners with it. So *hininog sila. Suntok sa buwan* but *na*-mold, *na*-nurture," says founding music director, Sebastian L. Trinidad.

What's endearing about them is that most of the kids belong to low-income families and work their butts off. Some may have to fetch water beforehand, put a sibling to sleep, or walk a half-hour to practice but seldom are they late for practice.

Oh, they're frisky motor-mouths who talk on top of their voices but when the founding stocky Kuya Baste bounds in, everybody shushes, falls in practice formation ready for opening prayer.

"I've never seen such hardworking kids," the 27-year-old leader notes. "When practice goes on and on until we hit the right notes, you don't hear any complaints from them."

And even when difficulties cropped left and right, they'd see to it that they didn't add to the tension. The problems were huge. The Korean embassy accepted the contingent's visa applications only after the fifth attempt. Picture Baste's secretary, Feny Manalo, going to and fro for five days lugging an enormous plastic box full of travel requisites.

Visa release was finally scheduled—but only two days after the scheduled departure date.

The Philippines had winners on hand and they couldn't leave? "Oh no, at all costs, we'd get our trophies," the children chorused before a farewell concert.

Thank heavens angels must've led desperate parents to the amiable Ambassador Jose Abeto Zaide, DFA chief of protocol.

Two days after, the Filipino youngsters were on the plane for Korea. But not after leaving one member behind who misplaced her passport at home. Luckily, she was able to join the others in time for the contemporary music category.

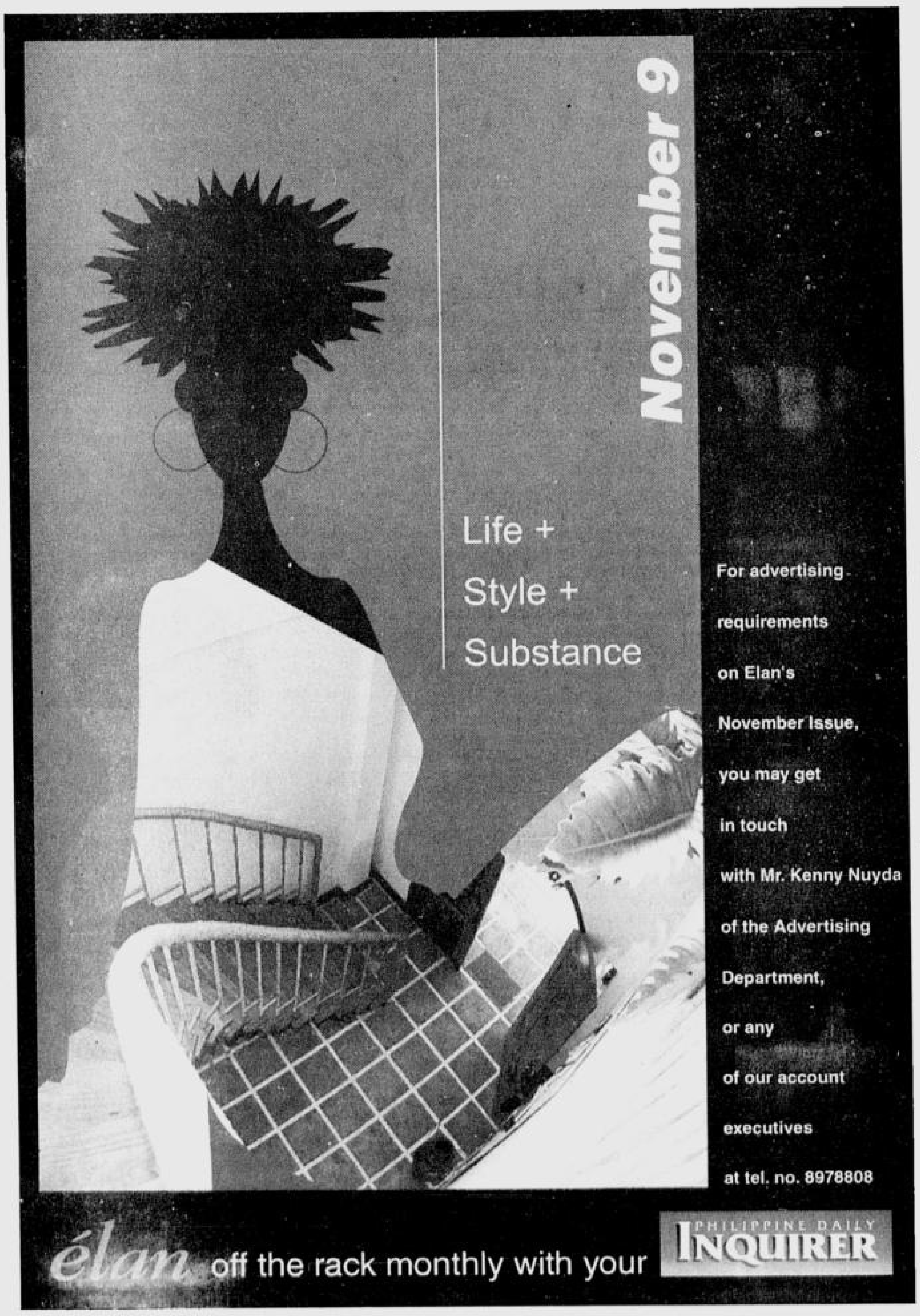
The MCC, a laboratory choir of the UP College of Music, and who are happiest singing the contemporary music of Filipino young composers, was a self-assured bunch who grabbed the respect of fellow competitors and lensmen in Busan. Nominated by national artist and Philippine Madrigal Singers founder, Andrea O. Veneracion, they proudly showcased the Filipino soul at open air mini concerts in sub-zero temperature, mixed it up with friendship encounter concerts at Bexco and always brought the house down with their body percussion Bungisngis and their pièce de résistance, Halelujah, Amen.

You catch a glimpse of a suited Caucasian in the balcony looking down his nose and clapping with his fingernails at the MCC's Alleluia. You look again as Larong Pambata, an intricate coordination of song and body movements, is interpreted and you see him at rapt attention. The next time you see him he's all over the place recording the magical moment with his camera. When Haleluja, Amen resounds throughout the Busan Cultural Center, he sits rigid with bated breath, eyes unblinking. And as the sound of the children's sagaypo and temple bells fade away, he wipes away a tear.

And in that instance, with a lump in the throat, one can't help shout Mabuhay! And the audience repeats, Mabuhay!

Hail our young singing warriors with hearts as big as the choral global village!

Halelujah, Amen.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"We Shall Overcome"

The National Day of Prayer and Fasting
November 9, 2002, Saturday, 3-4 p.m.

Almighty God, we exult You in Your greatness. May you grace us with Your presence as we come together as one nation with one heart and one mind.

Almighty God, we live in a world torn by strife, poverty, terror and deceit where the essence of our humanity is dulled. And so we pray, remind us of the reason for our being and that we were all created in Your image and likeness.

Remind us of our strength as the hand-made of Your love so we could selflessly share our character, talents and resources in the spirit of love, courage, power and justice that You bestowed on us. So that w hen we are faced with poverty, we may rise above the situation and realize self-reliance. When we are weakened, we can find strength. When we see greed and corruption, we stand up with conscientiousness and honesty. When we are shackled by oppression, we fight for freedom. When we find ourselves in the midst of struggle, we pursue with perseverance. When we find suffering, we offer compassion and action. When we are divided by different beliefs, we stand united in tolerance and understanding.

So today, dear God, open our eyes to the truth of love, peace, hope and joy amidst adversity. Help us to believe in Your goodness and look straight in the eyes of our brothers and sisters and see that same goodness in them. Help us build our country NOT in the illusion of material wealth, aggression, influence and coercion. Help us to see that You alone, God, are the firm foundation of our nation. And despite differences in color and creed, we can be one in praise, prayer and purpose through Your spirit of love. For with You, and You alone, shall we overcome. Amen.

* * *

This Saturday, November 9 at 3p.m., the Filipino nation will pause to reflect and express its unity and solidarity through prayer. We will offer an hour of our time to seek strength from God and divine guidance for the challenges that face us as a country. We enjoin everyone to gather and pray in these sites;

Prayer Sites :

- Boni Ave. cor Sn. Joaquin St., Mandaluyong City
  (Theme: The Strong republic worships God and cares for Man)
  - *prayer led by* ***President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo***
- Dr. Torres Memorial Hospital, Lamitan, Basilan, ARMM
  (Theme: The Strong Republic protects and develops the nation)
  - *prayer led by* ***Vice-President Teofisto Guingona***
- Fuente Osmena, Cebu
  (Theme: The Strong Republic promotes prosperity and justice)
  - *prayer led by* ***Chief Justice Hilario Davide***
- Igorot Park, Baguio City
  (Theme: The Strong Republic enriches our land and our culture)
  - *prayer led by* ***House Speaker Jose de Venecia***
- Sea Front, Iloilo City
  (Theme: The Strong Republic is founded on upright living and a moral society)
  - *prayer led by* ***Senate President Franklin Drilon***
- Camp Duma Sinsuat
  (Theme: The Strong Republic brings peace, unity and understanding to all)
  - *prayer led by* ***Gov. Parouk Hussin***

These will be replicated in the various communities and churches all over the country. We encourage everyone to offer a prayer with their families wherever they are.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

For roaring laughter, good music, take a big dose of Arpie & the Multivitamins

ONLY THREE more very short nights and you'll have to wait six more months before you get another chance to enjoy a two-in-one show of laugh-out-loud humor and sheer good music.

Tomorrow night, Monday and Wednesday are the last three nights of the vivacious group called Arpie & the Multivitamins at the theater lounge of the Siete Pecados at Westin Hotel.

Arpie & the Multivitamins is a convincing reason to go out at night for pure entertainment, coupled with a drink or two, despite the terrorist threats and the bomb scares in the city. It is certainly a good reason to kick back and laugh in between rounds of rousing or soothing music.

For the past many months, Arpie & the Multivitamins has been shaking the Siete Pecados with uproarious laughter and different types of music as it performs twice a night three nights a week. The lounge always has good bands dishing up a wide range of music, but often just that—plain music. But when the applause from the lounge crowd is particularly thunderous, and when the spiels are always met with appreciative hoots and hollers and loud laughter, that means the nine-member Arpie & the Multivitamins is on. Which means, that everyone is having a good time,including, apparently, the band.

The group's music is as good as the music served up by most of the other fine live bands in the land. In one set of performance, that music can be anything from old ("so old it is now heard only in kambingan, or in province-bound buses," notes Arpie), to Mandy Moore, from Martin Nievera and Gary V to Queen. Name it, and more often than not, the band will do it, even if it's only a few bars. Nobody goes away ungratified after every Arpie & the Multivitamins performance. Often, people leave sated, and they come back for more.

And that's just because of the music, as sung by vocalists Icy Quimpo, who can be Mandy Moore one song and Regine Velasquez or Mariah Carey the next; Joel Lozano, whose voice soars with the high notes of Martin and other balladeers; and Paul Irugin, the one who takes over when the going gets pop. It doesn't hurt that all three vocalists are lookers to boot.

But the fun and the laughter is caused by Arpie, the front man, the jester, the social critic, the stand-up comic, the master of ceremonies, who is also a very good singer, and, when the night is especially amiable, the collector. He is mostly the reason why Arpie & the Multivitamins is such an effective medicine for the wit and the spirit.

Thanks to the lean laugh-making machine called Arpie, the group can reach out to all audiences, from the foreign tourists and professionals at Siete Pecados to family-night-out groups and barkadas in a bar in Bicutan.

On Wednesday, Arpie & and the Multivitamins performs in a farewell show at Siete Pecados, with special guest Elizabeth Ramsey. It will be, according to Arpie, a "mother and child" reunion. It will definitely mean double the fun and double the rockin'.

And then, for the next six months, Arpie & the Multivitamins will be swallowed by the big-spending audiences in Japan. Catch the band before it goes on the run. *LCC*

BEST MEDICINE. Arpie with co-vocalists Icy Quimpo, Paul Irugin and Joel Lozano; Mike Morales, keyboard; Niño Hernandez, drums; Robert Claro, guitar; Peck Santos, sax; Abner Bañez, bass.

Will Vi's crossover revive her rivalry with Guy?

ABS-CBN STAR. Vilma Santos gets more flexible offer.

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

MANY people were surprised when **Vilma Santos** made the big switch. From GMA 7, where she reigned for more than a decade with her musical-variety show, "Vilma," the Star for All Seasons recently signed up with ABS-CBN, where she joins other big artists such as **Dolphy, Sharon Cuneta, Maricel Soriano** and **Nora Aunor**.

Did Nora's new soap-opera, "Bituin," on ABS-CBN prompted Vilma's entry as a perpetuation of their long-time rivalry?

Vilma says ABS-CBN's offer came even before she started filming "Dekada '70," **Chito Roño**'s period political drama for Star Cinema, the network's film outfit. The movie is intended as an official entry in the Metro Manila Manila Film Festival in December.

"At that time, I had very limited time to do TV, so I told **Malou Santos** we should talk again after 'Dekada'," Vilma says. "The film took two years to finish and ABS-CBN's offer was still there. So when they asked me again, I said yes."

Vilma, however, insists she will always be grateful to GMA 7 for supporting her career.

"I worked with GMA 7 for a long time and they're my family, too," she says. "At the time I decided to have a baby, I still had a contract with them and they didn't sue me. I will always be grateful to them for the support they gave me.

"But ABS-CBN gave me a more flexible offer, considering my job as mayor of Lipa. Based on my availability, they asked me what I wanted and that was a big factor for me."

The fact that her last three movies—Roño's "Bata, Bata Paano Ka Ginawa," **Rory Quintos'** "Anak" and "Dekada '70"—were also with Star Cinema was also an advantage for Vilma.

"It will be a lot easier if the film outfit you're working for and the TV network are one and the same," she reasons out.

Vilma says she is simply making a homecoming to the network. Her first soap, "Larawan ng Pag-ibig," when she was only nine years old, was on Channel 2.

At the height of the popularity of her love team with **Edgar Mortiz**, who's now one of the directors of ABS-CBN, Vilma did other shows in the network like "Oh My Love," "Edgar Loves Vilma" and "D' Sensations."

For her new ABS-CBN contract, Vilma starts with a TV special to celebrate her 40 years in the business. In the live show, to be aired Dec. 8 at 9:30 p.m., she will be joined by her leading men—**Christopher de Leon, Cesar Montano, Aga Muhlach,** Dolphy, **Richard Gomez, Rudy Fernandez, Vic Sotto** and **Eric Quizon.**

Her son, **Luis**, 21, who's now also a contract star of ABS-CBN, will be a guest in the TV special, too.

The other guests are Nora Aunor, Sharon Cuneta and Maricel Soriano.

The retrospective will also have several key people in Vilma's long-running musical-variety show, like her producer **Chit Guerrero,** director **Romy Veron** and choreographer **Maribeth Bichara.**

Vilma has also agreed to do three telemovies for ABS-CBN, to be aired early next year.

When asked about her political plans, Vilma is mum. This early, some sectors are said to be grooming her to run for Batangas governor in the 2004 elections.

"I don't even want to think I would run again as Lipa mayor," Vilma says. "I don't want to have any political agenda. That can derail my plans and decisions.I just want to do my best."

Gary's back

TWO years ago, **Gary Estrada** took a well-deserved rest from show biz after he married actress **Bernadette Allyson.** He stopped making movies andm except for occasional TV appearances, made himself scarce in show biz.

But his absence seemed like an eternity to his fans. The actor, who was able to make a name for himself despite his formidable Estrada lineage, was launched in 1993's "Tag-araw, Tag-ulan." With his good looks, he easily became a matinee idol.

In 1999, he earned a best supporting actor nomination from the Film Academy of the Philippines.

Even as a newcomer, Gary worked with the likes of **Dina Bonnevie, Monique Wilson, Dawn Zulueta, Alice Dixson** and **Charlene Gonzales**, to name a few.

But while he was at the peak of his career in the late '90s, Gary surprised his fans when he quietly slipped out of the scene.

"The industry slump was building up then and I wasn't getting the roles that I wanted," he confesses.

He joined the Philippine Baseball Team and fulfilled a childhood dream of playing baseball.

"When I was growing up in Cagayan Valley, baseball was one of my favorite pastimes and I guess I haven't outgrown it," he says.

"I've been trying out for the Philippine team and the training is definitely tough. We have to wake up at 6:30 a.m. to jog. To make it to the team, we have to be able to go around the Rizal oval four times in six minutes and 30 seconds."

He competed in the Korea qualifier for the Sydney Olympics. The team beat Thailand but lost to Japan and Taipei.

Baseball has taught Gary the virtues of camaraderie and loyalty.

"My co-players are like my family now," he avers. "I almost made it to the team that went to the Asian games, but I did play with them during the Baseball Federation of Asia (BFA) games last year. We're number five in Asia now."

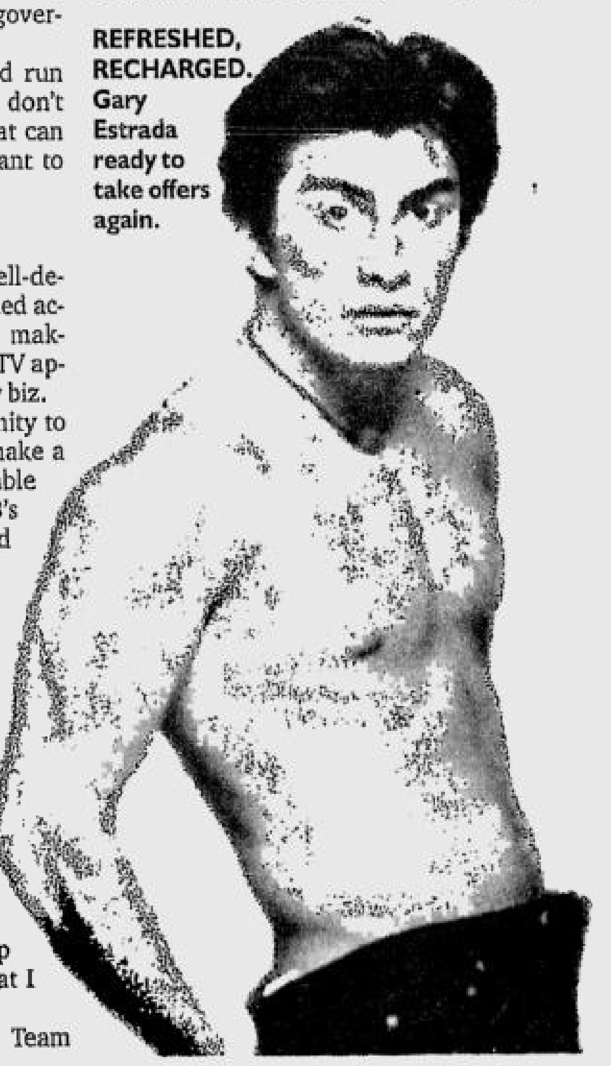
Refreshed and recharged, he's now more than ready to take on new offers. He has hired the services of veteran manager and events specialist **Arnold Vegafria**, who also handles the careers of Dina Bonnevie, **Maritoni Fernandez, Melissa de Leon, Ruby Rodriguez, Plinky Recto** and many others.

Last seen in "Sutla" with **Priscilla Almeda** and "Mister Mo, Lover Ko," Gary returns to the big screen in Maverick Films' upcoming flick, "Adan," with **Aya Medel, Allona Amor** and **Dick Israel.** The movie, directed by **Felix Dalay,** is slated for a Nov. 20 opening.

Gary is also excited about other offers from Viva Films and FLT Films. He says he would love to work with other actresses such as **Lorna Tolentino**, Maricel Soriano and Sharon Cuneta.

RJ at Captain's Bar

THE WEEKLY Friday performance of **Ramon "RJ" Jacinto** at the lobby of Edsa Shangri-La Hotel will be moved to Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental Manila every Friday, starting tonight.



REFRESHED, RECHARGED. Gary Estrada ready to take offers again.

RJ's Retro Party TONIGHT at MANDARIN Hotel

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'ABRE LOS OJOS' & 'VANILLA SKY'

Impressive vs imitation

By Seymour Barros Sanchez
Contributor

"WHAT IF the dream became a nightmare," asks Cesar (Eduardo Noriega), a rich restaurateur whose face has been disfigured in a freak car accident, in one of the highlights of the Spanish film "Abre los Ojos."

This is the same dialogue delivered by Tom Cruise as publishing magnate David Aames Jr. in Cameron Crowe's "Vanilla Sky," the Hollywood remake.

When I learned that the original, "Abre los Ojos" (Open Your Eyes), was scheduled to be shown at the UP Film Center's videotheque screening room as part of the three-day "Great Spanish Books on Great Films and Other Treasures of Spanish Cinema" program last week, I was more than eager to catch this psychological thriller after failing to see it last July at the Salon de Actos theater of the Instituto Cervantes de Manila.

The movie spurred my curiosity for two very good reasons. First, it was the second directorial project of Alejandro Amenabar whose initial output, "Tesis" (Thesis), was to me the most impressive among the seven entries in the Spanish film week at ArtFilm Greenbelt last month.

Second, this is admittedly the main source material for director Crowe's surreal "Vanilla Sky" where Penelope Cruz even reprised her role as Sofia, the main character's object of affection. Thus, it is just reasonable to refer to one movie, "Vanilla," while discussing the other, "Abre los Ojos."

Prior to seeing Amenabar's original work, I hadn't watched the American remake so I actually had no idea what to expect. After leaving the UP film venue satisfied, I immediately looked for a video of the second Cruise-Crowe collaboration (after the 1996 hit "Jerry Maguire"). One of my peers at Ricky Lee's 14th scriptwriting workshop had been commending "Vanilla Sky" since its regular theater run early this year. Naturally, I was intrigued.

Gothic vs vivacious

The two movies, obviously, have the same plot. Frame by frame, they are almost alike. Despite the difference in the occupations of the characters of Noriega and Cruise, both play the role of a self-centered womanizer compelled to reexamine his egotism and happy-go-lucky lifestyle after his face is destroyed in a suicidal car crash brought about by a jealous lover, Nuria (Najwa Nimri) in Amenabar's work and Julianna Gianni (Cameron Diaz), "the saddest girl to hold a Martini," in Crowe's remake.

Nimri resembles a gothic presence while Diaz is vivacious, once again displaying her butt-shaking moves from "Charlie's Angels."

True enough, Amenabar's fantasy drama establishes his genius in the dark genre, which even gave him a crack at Hollywood through the haunted house flick "The Others," curiously starring Nicole Kidman, Cruise's ex-wife.

On the other hand, Crowe, a former Rolling Stone magazine writer, came up with a rather optimistic movie despite the cryptic atmosphere, thanks mainly to his upbeat tunes and his image-conscious stars. Cruise may have also influenced Crowe's revision since he produced this film along with the director and Paula Wagner.

How else would you explain Cruise's toned-down character? Instead of the manipulative brat Cesar who will pounce at every opportunity that could benefit him in "Abre los Ojos," the Crowe production has David who acquires a magazine business from his parents after they die in an accident. While the Spanish version doesn't show Cesar's tormentors, his business partners who allegedly plan to take over their catering business, Crowe's movie shows the "seven dwarfs of the board," who jointly have a 49 percent stake in the magazine empire as against David's 51 percent share.

Fele Martinez, who teamed up with Amenabar and Noriega earlier in "Tesis," is Pelayo, Cesar's best friend who introduces him to Sofia. Jason Lee is the resilient pal Brian Shelby who introduces David to Sofia. Kurt Russell gives ample support to Cruise as David's psychologist.

All-star and high-tech

Given that "Vanilla Sky" boasts of an all-star cast with a New York setting complete with skyscrapers, it is logical to conclude that the remake has a bigger budget than the original. Aside from emptying Times Square for the opening scene, definitely at a cost higher than the Spanish production, Crowe's version also boasts of high-tech stuff.

Instead of the average camera used by Pelayo to photograph David and Sofia, his American counterpart Brian makes use of a webcam. David also has a flat-screen projection TV, even utilized for a video-conference, vis-à-vis Cesar's ordinary television.

Cruz plays the same character with the same name in both movies. While the Spanish movie has Sofia the mime actress, the American version has Sofia the dancer working part-time as a dental assistant. Since Crowe can't have Cruz instantly losing her Spanish accent, the new Sofia has to be a foreign student in New York.

Since "Abre los Ojos" is an interesting and surprising brain-twister, it definitely works to its advantage that some elements are left unexplained. With a non-linear storytelling reminiscent of Christopher Nolan's "Memento," it appropriately leaves the audience perplexed and tension rises up to the end.

Viewers have a mind of their own and can analyze the story, and Crowe evidently misses this point. Still, Crowe makes good use of his rock and roll background by coming up with a likeable soundtrack of pop music. Never mind if Cruise is singing "What if God was one of us?" at the top of his lungs while his character is set to undergo surgery after the accident. Or if the beach party song "Good Vibrations" plays in the background as David is panicking.

Imitation, as they say, is the sincerest form of flattery. However, merely imitating an impressive movie does not guarantee that the resulting imitation will impress viewers, too.

Bizarre but...

From page A32

matching the dichotomized paranoia and looseness of De Mesa's character. She becomes Sisa personified, while Ramos does a seemingly inadvertent Power Boys impression by being towel-clad half the time. It's discomforting when the pair's drug use results in less than amiable consequences. Certain parts look like a high-concept jeans commercial, but this piece comes off as the most visually playful and the most exciting one in the whole anthology.

De Mesa proves that she's not your average bold star du jour, as she shows a pretty good range by becoming various familiar women who get caught in different stages of dishabille.

"Bedtime Stories" is a trio of films in one, a nicely crafted package that sticks in your head for a long time, for all the right reasons.

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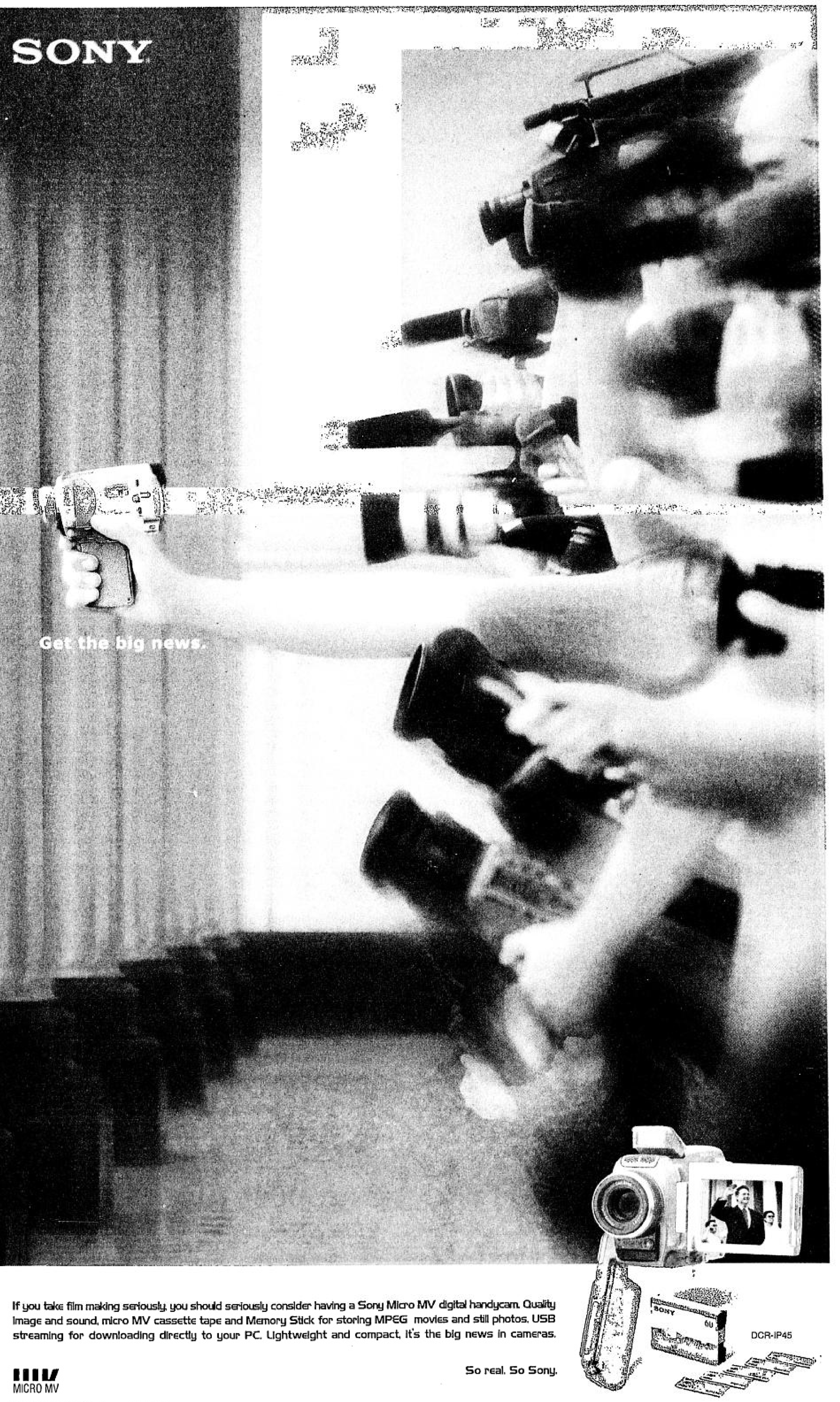

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Innovative ways to lure more viewers to moviehouses

NOT just movie producers but also theater owners are currently thinking up innovative ways to lure moviegoers out of their viewing lethargy. The latest wrinkle is the SM Cinema chains decision to offer discounted tickets for first screenings from Monday to Thursday.

This should encourage people to see films in the late-morning hours, and thus spread out theater use beyond the more popular screening hours. The use of discounted tickets for "week" viewing hours has worked very well abroad, and should be similarly effective here.

Another interesting play is the growing popularity of "advanced" screenings of new films, a couple of days before their official opening day. This gambit works particularly well in the Philippines because it appeals to the Filipino's need to be "in," to be among the first to see or otherwise sample anything.

Even if it's only a lead of one or two days, that's good enough for local viewers who, when talk comes around to new movie releases, can "casually" comment to friends, "Oh, I saw it last night already, sa advance screening. *Ok naman siya...*"

What other innovations can movie house owners come up with to lure viewers? More ways to reduce ticket prices would be most welcome, since some theaters admission prices have gone through the roof, and moviegoing is no longer the cheapest form of entertainment in these parts.

Special days for young viewers would interest both parents and kids, especially if they offer a package of cartoons and/or a wholesome full-length feature.

Some fans would like to see retrospective of the best movies of their favorite stars. And cult movies draw big audiences to special screenings, complete with costumes, a party atmosphere, and audience commentary. Other bright ideas are most welcome, and should be rewarded with increased audience patronage.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Boob-tube booboos

HOST: I hear you have a wonderful street festival and parade coming up.. Can you share with our viewers some of its highlights?

Guest: Gladly! We will have beautiful floats. The public in the sidewalk streets will be enough just by staring and appreciating the floats in the trucks parading all over the town!

(*Ano daw?*)

***

Host: Any other highlights?

Guest: Of course, dancers. There are more than 10 groups participating. They have been rehearsing for months just to meet the people's anxiousness.

(Come again?)

Guest: Because it's important the costumes, so everybody will be excellently parading their body figures!

(Huh?!)

Guest: Because, as you very well know, the dances are the most popular recipes in the festival!

(Recipes?)

Guest: But the best and most colorful float is the one submitted by the Pueraculture Center!

(Pueraculture?)

Guest: All of these is extremely important to make a fantastic and entertaining to the eye visual display to keep the expectators intact!

(—We give up!)

'Angel' back on Studio 23

AT 9 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 8, studio 23 starts telecasting the third season of "Angel." The one-hour series combines spooky adventure and dark humor in a story about the twists and turns of a vampire in today's world.

A centuries-old vampire cursed with a conscience, Angel (**David Boreanz**) leaves the small town of Sunnydale and the only woman he's ever loved to live in Los Angeles, the ideal place for a fallen vampire who wants to save a few souls, and perhaps redeem his own.

The series also features the specialized group called Angel Investigations, made up of characters played by **Charisma Carpenter**, **Alexis Denisof**, **J. August Richards** and **Amy Acker**. The group is guided to those who need their help through visions sent to Cordelia (Carpenter) by The Powers That Be, a powerful force trying to make things right and to guide Angel on his path to redemption.

Movies on TV

WEEKEND treats on the HBO channel:

Friday, Nov. 8 at 5 p.m., "Pay It Forward." 12:30a.m., "The Original Kings of comedy."

Saturday, Nov. 9 at 1:30p.m., "Joan of Arc." 11p.m., "Six Feet Under: The Room."

Sunday, Nov. 10 at 7:30 a.m., "Wit." 11a.m., "Romeo Must Die." 1p.m. "Band of Brothers: Currahee/Day of Days." 3:15 p.m., "King Solomon's Mines." 8p.m., "The Patriot." 12:20 a.m., "Hanover Street."

On the Cinemax channel: Friday, Nov. 8 at 8:15 a.m., "Cinema Secrets: Visions of the Future." 7:30 p.m., "The Out-of-Towners." 5:30 a.m., "Cinema Secrets: Remoking Reality."

Saturday, Nov. 9 at 4p.m., "Young Sherlock Holmes." 3:45 a.m., "The Screaming Room: The 10 Scariest Films Ever Made."

Sunday, Nov. 10 at 6 a.m., "Who's Minding the Store?" 11:30 a.m., "Millenium Man." 4p.m., "School Ties."

'Wheels of Love'

ABS-CBN's new telenovela, "Wheels of Love," begins airing at 10 a.m., on Monday, Nov. 11, replacing "Nunca te Olvidare." **Vanessa Acosts** plays the female protagonist, Mari Jo.

Joining her are four other Maxican charmers—**Vanessa Villela** (Renate), **Alejandra Urdain** (Cecilia), **Barbara Mori** (Nelly) and **Sandra Echevarria** (Mariana).

The telenovela is set on a college campus. Mari Jo is an idealistic young woman who believes she has found the love of her life in Jose (**Mark Tacher**), a handsome radio program host. But two antagonists are determined to ruin the ideal relationship—Nelly, an emotionally disturbed woman who is fixated on Jose, and Carlos, a young gangster who wants to build the perfect family with Mari Jo, with or without her consent.

LOVELY BONES. Chanda Romero contributed ideas in the production of the "terrors."

The long making of creatures for 'Shortcut: Spirit Warriors 2'

By Remy M. Umerez
Contributor

TERRIFYING creatures will continue to attack long after Halloween and through Christmas. That is, in the horror adventure fantasy, Chito Roño's "Spirit Warriors 2, the Shortcut" from Regal Entertainment.

The first "Spirit Warriors," also by Roño, was one of the highest grossing films of the 2002 Metro Manila Film Festival. It raised the bar of the horror movie genre in terms of technical excellence and visual effects. It is a landmark film by which all feature horror adventure movies may be measured.

The creatures take center stage again in the sequel, which combines supernatural scares with youthful adventures.

What are these creatures?

The *babaylan* is a female spirit who can float in mid-air and disappear at will.

The Man in Shadows is half-man, half-*engkanto* who can transform into a horse.

The *tikbalang* is half-man, half horse.

Roño reinterpreted the *aswang* to make it look more animal-like. It can burst into hundreds of bats which attack like bees. There are about 20 of these in the story.

An *engkanto* army helps the boys in the story defeat the *aswang*.

And more. *Tiyanak*. Flying and jumping fish. Mermaid Queen. Cadavers coming back to life.

Tasked to create these creatures are the wizards of Roadrunner Network Inc. and topnotch prosthetics artists and creature makers Cecille Baun and Benny Batoctoy.

Audiences will be in awe at the sight, for example, of seven dazzling mermaids, a creation of Baun whose 30 years it the business is hard to equal.

"*Direk* Chito wanted mermaids to resemble tropical fishes which are colorful and don't resemble Dyesebel, and with organic body parts," says Baun. "Working with designs by Roadrunners' Carol Bernaldez was a great help."

Batoctoy was tasked to create the killer *tiyanak*.

"*Direk* Chito wanted the tiyanak to have a grotesque ferocious look that departs from the often seen imagery of these lower mythology figures. He didn't want the type that is cuddly one minute and then horrific the next. He wanted all-out bestial babes that are craggy and rock-like in features. They should be fast, furious and flesh-hungry."

BENNY Batoctoy creates a monster.

For the *aswang*, the instructions were to make them very beastly and their movements quick and violent. Not hairy but with the skin exposed and quite muscular. They should be able to leap fast and dive for kills.

A lot of evolution took place in the making of the *tikbalang*. The design took six months to complete before the look they wanted was finally achieved. The actual making of the monstrous creatures, standing over eight feet tall, took over a year.

When completed it comes out as a gigantic, muscular creature. The facial expressions and specific movements are done by remote control and some animatronics.

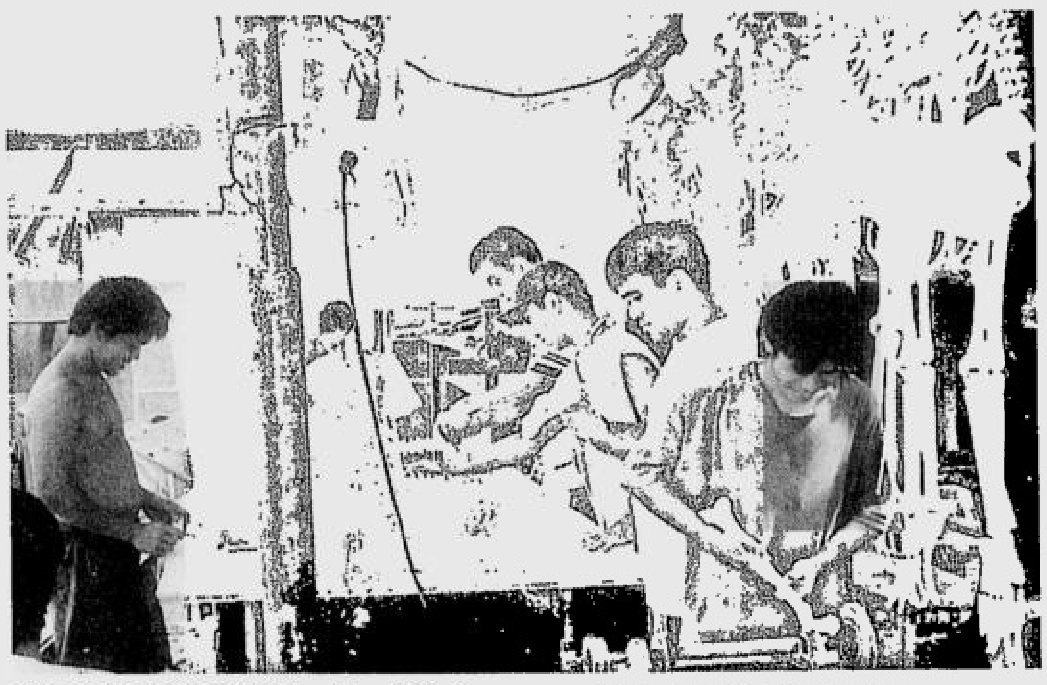
Each of the human skeletons is made up of more than 300 bones. To make each one move for the cameras was a masterful challenge. Actress Chanda Romero, who has always been interested in special effects, contributed ideas and helped the art department.

"It is no joke to string up 300 bones together for 10 separate skeletons," says Baun, who describes the job as "*pinaka-madetalye*."

In "Spirit Warriors 2," the attack of the malevolent skeletons unfolds as the Spirit Warriors (played by the Streetboys) make a bid to snatch a powerful ancient amulet from the long-buried corpse in an old provincial cemetery.

The making of the big budgeted "Spirit Warriors, the Shortcut" took two years to make, from conceptualization to Day One of principal photography, with half the budget going to the prosthetics, creature production, computer generated imagery (CGI) and visual effects.

Regal is entering it in the Metro Manila Film Festival which unfolds next month.



OUT OF THE CLOSET. More than 300 pieces are needed to make up one skeleton.

'Tia' Dely's secret: Love your work

By Fernando "Donan" Sazon
Contributor

THE 12TH Golden Dove Awards last Oct. 21 was a validation of the long suspected wedge between the print and broadcast media in the country. While the print media's Philippine Movie Press Club Star Awards gave most of its trophies to GMA 7 and its radio stations, KBP's Golden Doves went mostly to rival network ABS-CBN and radio stations all over the Philippines.

The individual awards for best anchors and announcers, best hosts and best shows also went mostly to ABS-CBN, with a few exceptions (obscure provincial stations in Bicol, the Visayas and Mindanao).

What was most glaring, however, was the winning of some platter shows dubbed as "classical music programs" over live, all-Filipino classic songs and ballads. Chopin and Mozart, Brahms and Bethoven lorded it over Lucio San Pedro and Levi Celerio and Diomedes Maturan and the great Filipina divas.

There is, however, a saving grace for the 12th Golden Dove Awards: The selection of its lifetime achievement award will stand uncontested for all time.

The audience held its breath as the slim and regal 82-year-old beauty walked elegantly in her Filipina dress. A long standing ovation ensued until she was at the podium and bowed slightly to say thank you. Her brother Tony Magpayo escorted her to receive her award from a young woman from ABS-CBN.

"Tia" Dely Magpayo spoke in her usual sweet and well modulated voice that still sounds like that of a beautiful 30-year-old.

"I will never be able to repay KBP for this honor," she said in Filipino. "I give thanks to all who have helped me make it to where I am now, and to all my listeners who have followed me all these years."

She said she believes that loved ones and people who have gone ahead to the Great Beyond are just around happily watching what is going on.

Her signature ending: "*At paalam na sa 'yo, sa 'yo, at higit sa lahat, sa iyo* (and goodbye to you, to you, and most of all, to you)!" That drew a standing ovation that lasted the whole time she was walking down the stage and back to her seat.

MAGPAYO

Last Oct. 29, Tia Dely celebrated her 82nd birthday at MBC's DZRH while she performed her regular week-day work. She has been working for the past 62 years as radio announcer, program host, singer, soap opera producer, writer, director, TV personality, movie actress, newspaper columnist, and adviser to the lovelorn. She has seldom been absent, sick, or late for work.

She says her secret is "Love your work. Work well loved makes it a happy event that becomes like play and makes one look forward to everyday of one's life, like I have done these 62 years."

She has been faithful to her fans all these years, and they have grown in number, spanning the A, B, C, D, and E brackets. She and they have been faithful as her real name: Fidela, faithful.

Born in Malate, Manila of parents from Malolos, Bulacan, Fidela Magpayo was the fifth of nine children.

The KBP Golden Dove Lifetime Achievement Award for Fidela "Tia Dely" Magpayo awaits company.

Musicians, writers, educators, scientists, painters, poets, and others are given the National Artist Award. No such award has been given so far to a broadcaster. Why not Tia Dely, National Artist for Broadcast?

But we hear that a prestigious association has to nominate the candidate. The KBP will do well to do so.

MTV to name best model in 'Fashionista' finals

FINALISTS in this year's MTV Fashionista's "Best Model Search."

MTV Philippines presents 20 male and female ramp mannequins who will vie for the top prize in MTV Fashionista's "Best Model Search 2002," slated Nov. 12 at the NBC Tent.

The male finalists are: Ritchie Odejar, a six-foot hunk-to-the core fixture entrepreneur; Ton Lao, a 5'11" charity hunk and an aspiring architect; Adrian Ceniza, a 5'9" extreme sports and music enthusiast; Don Panganiban, a 5'11" classic Pinoy looker; Jasler Ubaldo, a typical boy-next-door Tarlac native; Dos Queng, a 6'2" unpretentious lover of the outdoors; Kelly Davis, a 5'11" classic mestizo looker; Edward Bunugan, a 5'11" potential matinee idol; Mark Hernandez, a six-foot-tall dark athlete; and Bim Cecilio, a charming 5'11" native of Albay.

The female finalists are: Riva Parkinson, a 5'9" meek-looking model who is into visual arts; Cecil de Guzman, a 5'8" sultry looker; Monica Padilla, a 5'7-1/2" brown eyed, well-traveled model; Bambi Abdulsani, a 5'8" beauty Tom South Cotabato; Nikki Quesada, a 5'7-1/2" angelic and simple gal; Francesca Briñas, a 5'9" seraphic-looking Filipina beauty; Love Bacallo, a 5'9" talented morena who aspires to be a writer and a doctor; Duckee Timaro, a 5'7" mysterious and esoteric beauty; Gilmarie Pacamarra, a 5'9" model from Bicol who loves to travel; and Ella Evangelista, a 5'8" sports and nature lover.

The finals will be directed by Robby Carmona and promises to be an explosive night of glitz, glamour and entertainment.

One male and one female finalist will be awarded the title "MTV Fashionista Best Model" and will be the country's representatives to the Best Model of the World Contest to be held in Istanbul, Turkey on Nov. 29.

The polling promo service runs until Nov. 12.

To access the service, key in MTV and send to 2430. To register to the service, key in REG<complete name> and send to 2430.

To vote for your favorite model, key in vote<name of model> and send to 2430.

Every vote entitles the subscriber to a raffle point/entry. The more votes submitted, the more chances of winning.

The promo is open to all Smart and Talk 'N Text subscribers.

The "MTV Fashionista Best Model Search 2002" is presented by Smart Simply Amazing, Samsung Digitall, New Lux Super Rich Shampoo, Nivea Visage and JAG Jeans.

‘Changing Lanes’: Of corruption and decent men

By Ruben M. Cruz Jr.
Contributor

REVIEW

HAVE YOU ever seen anyone jump out of a building? The person, even before he jumps, creates a spectacle that, although sickening, glues people’s eyes on it.

It’s human nature. We’re attracted to sights of tragedy like moths to a flame. The sight of all those people jumping from the World Trade Center on Sept. 11 was so horrifying, but it was also so thoroughly watchable.

In many ways, “Changing Lanes” is a cinematic version of watching someone jump out of a building. Much as we dread looking at the lives of two men who have taken the course to mutual self-destruction, we cannot tear ourselves away. As painful as the film is, it is also never less than enthralling.

AFFLECK

JACKSON

Gavin Banek (Ben Affleck) is a young, hotshot Wall Street lawyer who moves about in the upper crust of society. At 29, he’s already assured of a partnership in his boss’s law firm, thanks to the fact that he’s also the boss’ son-in-law. He drives the latest sports Mercedes, has a new yacht, and is living the life he always wanted to live.

On the other end, we have Doyle Gipson (Samuel Jackson), a recovering, middle-aged alcoholic and small-time insurance agent who’s trying to get back on his feet. Recently divorced, his wife wants to take their kids as far away from him as possible. He wants to convince his wife that he’s a changed man and tries to keep his family close by offering them a small house he can barely manage to pay.

Accidental

Gavin and Doyle are two very different men. They meet through a freeway accident that shows more of their differences, but we also see as the film progresses that they also have a lot of things in common.

For one, the accident could not have been more ill timed for both men. They are both rushing to court on the most important day of their lives. Doyle is going to court for a hearing that would determine his claim for joint custody of his children, while Gavin needs to present a power of appointment that could save his law firm from a multi-million lawsuit, and perhaps even his partners (his father-in-law included) from doing time in jail.

They are civil after the accident—both asking if the other is all right. Doyle wants to settle things the right way by exchanging licenses and insurance information. His effort to be legally straight is understandable considering that he’s trying to be a respectable citizen and family man again.

Gavin, though, just wants to get to court on time. He offers Doyle a blank check, and when the latter refuses to take it—again insisting that the accident be resolved properly—Gavin speeds off in his car, leaving Doyle stranded in the middle of the freeway.

Doyle misses his hearing and loses his wife and kids. Gavin makes it to his hearing but realizes he left his crucial power of appointment with the now very angry Doyle. Gavin wants his file back, and Doyle wants his time back. What follows is an escalating war of attrition that changes both men’s lives and destroys their perspectives on reality, for better and for worse.

Brinkmanship

“Changing Lanes” labels itself as a suspense thriller, and seeing the trailer, it would be easy to conclude that the film is a one-note take on the conflict between two men, a game of brinkmanship that gets ugly and takes us along on its gripping ride.

But the film deals with much more and cuts deeper. As the story unfolds, we see that it’s about a whole system of values in which people are victims and victimizers, and how sometimes monstrous selfishness can be falsely held up to be the greatest good in everyday human interactions.

The conflict between Gavin and Doyle reflects in no small measure the conflicts they are battling within themselves. As their lives are revealed to us layer by intricate layer after the accident, we recognize that the struggles of the two men actually resonate similar chords.

Both are trying to recover their moral compasses. Doyle has been corrupted by his addiction, which, it turns out, is more than just alcohol. His Alcoholics Anonymous counselor (William Hurt, brilliant despite being relegated to just 10 minutes of screen time) recognizes this. He tells Doyle he is “hooked on disaster” and that chaos is his drug of choice.

Yet from the onset it is obvious that Doyle is a decent man, a good father and a loving husband who just wants a second chance at life. Even his wife (Kim Staunton) acknowledges that in moving away from him, she’s actually searching for a better version of Doyle, the Doyle that she met and loved.

Painful scene

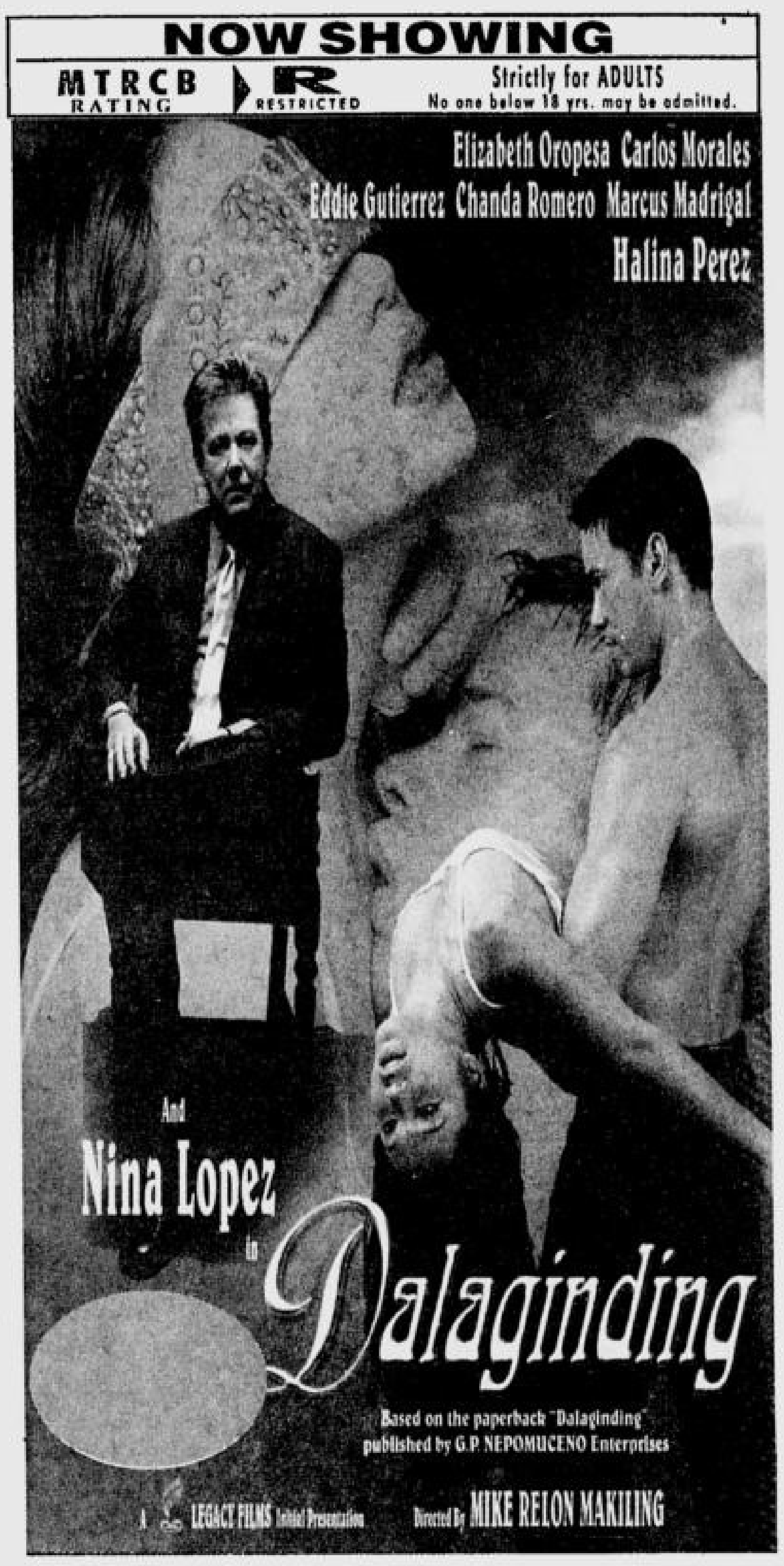
Gavin likewise is a decent man who is just realizing how corrupt he is becoming. His law firm is the archetype of the poisonous corporate environment that people try to survive and thrive in at the expense of their souls.

People like Gavin are dying inside and they don’t even know it. Personal advancement has become the be-all and end-all of their existence and the struggle for power has become their only reality.

There is an incredibly painful scene in the film where Gavin’s wife (Amanda Peet) actually tries to manipulate him to do the wrong thing for the sake of the law firm, even using her knowledge of Gavin’s infidelity as a bargaining chip. “I could have married an honest man…” she says. “But I didn’t. I married a Wall Street lawyer, which means I married someone who lives in a world where when a man comes to the edge of things, he has to commit to staying there and living there…”

It is impossible to sit through “Changing Lanes” without reading our own realities and moralities into the predicaments of the two protagonists. It is impossible to ask how two fairly decent men could suddenly become capable of unleashing such repulsively mean-spirited schemes on each other, without asking how we also are at times given to acts of depravity against each other. It is impossible to condemn the brutal social climate that drives Gavin and Doyle’s interactions and not become uncomfortable about our own society.

More than a suspense thriller, “Changing Lanes” is a morality check that is likely to stay with the viewer long after the lights come on.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3 IN ONE. Maricar de Mesa.

‘BEDTIME STORIES’

Bizarre but believable sexual oddities

By Oliver Pulumbarit
Contributor

THE PEACHY sex anthology "Bedtime Stories" collects three unorthodox short stories penned by Jun Lana and directed by the pliable Maryo J. de los Reyes. Almond-eyed Maricar De Mesa plays four different roles, showing flexibility as disparate women whose sex lives are anything but typical.

REVIEW

All three stories border on the bizarre but are still believable, tackling various uncommon kinks that often happen in dim, unspoken recesses.

The movie's entire running time is appropriately divided to contain concise tales that would otherwise have been chafingly stretched had they been separate full-length films. These three parts work auspiciously as a collection of sexual oddities.

Girl-on-girl

In the first yarn, "Kung Gusto Mong Nasasaktan, Gusto Mong Nananakit," battered wife Marta (De Mesa) forcibly leaves her doomed relationship with the womanizing Lino (Anton Bernardo), which serves as the catalyst for a fruitful new relationship between her and altruistic GRO-stripper Esmeralda (Ynez Veneracion). Marta recovers from her martyr's stupor and discovers a side to her that she didn't imagine she would enjoy: a penchant for girl-on-girl action that coincidentally (of course) liberates her to dance in the buff in front of rowdy men.

Lesbianism is a pretty common sexual subject and isn't peculiar at all. What's pinpointed here is the infliction of physical pain, and how the involved parties get their jollies by dishing it out or taking it. But De Mesa and Veneracion scorch as the cagey lez couple, effectually transmitting no nervous vacuity in their scenes together. There's sincerity, yes, and, more importantly, an off-the-cuff impression that their relationship exists and works.

It's quite pleasing to have women characters who aren't one-dimensional minxes.

Sure, they peddle their wares on stage, but they do it knowing that they can still be themselves after the day's work. They don't need men to complete them.

Death love

"Kung Gusto Mo sa Malamig na Bangkay" has De Mesa playing twins, a biology teacher and a balikbayan. We follow the teacher's bespectacled student Benjie (Iraz Melchor) who harbors a secret infatuation with her for the longest time. It's only when her flirty twin Fiona reciprocates with a heartfelt smile that we see him flash a rare one himself, so imagine his dismay when Fiona suddenly bites the dust. He takes advantage of the fact that her body's in his mortician mother's small morgue; and, well, necrophilia ensues.

This second tale isn't as disturbing as it should've been mainly because the lovemaking-with-a-corpse scene is almost diffidently shown in quick head shots of both characters. Melchor's pouty naivete captivates, even when his Benjie does the most irrational, most perplexing things. His hobby, turning dead frogs into taxidermic works of art, is nicely executed.

De Mesa doesn't stand out in this portion, but she does make the mousy but still sexually aware teacher plausible. Elizabeth Oropesa as Benjie's mother is still very much respectable, and while her role here's nowhere near as heavy as her recent work in "Laman," she defines any shell given to her, no matter how silly or cartoony her lines may get.

Drugs, detection

The final story, "Kung Gusto Mong Lumipad," features De Mesa as a drug-addled, semi-dreadlocked tough chick. Wendell Ramos plays her best friend's pusher boyfriend, who wastes no time in offering her some Ecstacy pills and other time-killling services.

As it turns out, there's a mystery that needs to be solved, secrets that just might complicate their one-night stand.

This part's creaky and jumpy camera work tends to keep things curiously enigmatic,

BIZARRE/ A29

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BSP to maintain low interest rates

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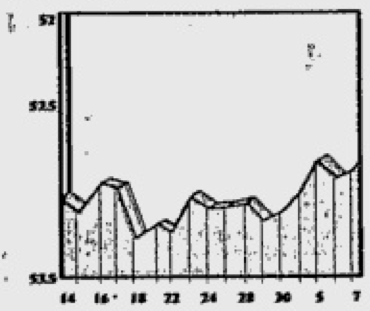

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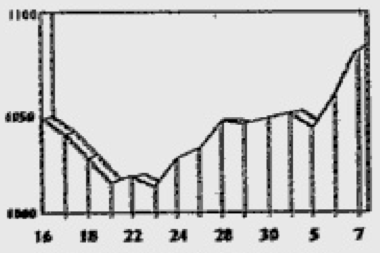
STOCK MARKET

Stocks up on Fed rate cut

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES surged more than 2 percent yesterday, their biggest percentage gain in nearly three months, as investors banked on an easing of local monetary policy in the wake of sharp interest rate cuts by the US Federal Reserve, traders said.

The Fed on Wednesday surprised markets with a bigger-than-expected 50 basis points cut in its key rates.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the news would not prompt a change in its current neutral rates stance.

"That's the bank's statement now but they may change their stance. It (the Fed cut) probably gives them scope for a further easing," said BPI Investment Management trading head Carlos Ylagan.

The main index closed up 23.16 points, or 2.18 percent, at 1,083.60 points. It was the sharpest daily percentage gain since a rise of 2.6 percent on Aug. 13 this year.

Value turnover surged to P627.5 million from P459.5 million on Wednesday.

Turnover has been up sharply over the past two days as local and foreign bargain hunters snapped up stocks seen as undervalued at current levels.

Ylagan also said there may be some end-of-year buying emerging as investors sought to make quick profits ahead of Christmas.

"Last year we saw buying emerging going into December. We may be trying to follow suit with an early Santa Claus rally," he said.

Globe led the broad market up, rising P15, or 2.4 percent, to P425 on top turnover of P96.6 million. *Reuters*

Cebu Pacific begins daily service to Singapore

SINGAPORE — Philippine airline Cebu Pacific Air launched a new daily service into Singapore's Changi International Airport Thursday, aviation officials said.

The new once-daily service increases the number of weekly flights between Singapore and Manila from 35 to 42, said a statement from the Civil Aviation Authority of Singapore.

The authority hopes the new service will build business and tourism links between the two countries, the statement said.

The Philippines is one of the main sources of visitors to Singapore. Last month, the number of visitors from the Philippines fell 6.5 percent from same period last year to 13,606, according to the Singapore Tourism Board's website. *AP*

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said the half-percentage-point cut in US interest rates would help keep local rates at current low levels for a longer period but was not likely to trigger any further monetary easing.

"We welcome it because it reinforces our neutral policy stance and gives us more flexibility to keep our key rates low for a longer period. This improves our rates differential with them and that should help stabilize our exchange rate," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said yesterday.

The bigger difference between peso and dollar interest rates provide a better incentive for investors to keep their placements in the local currency.

Buenaventura, who also chairs the Monetary Board, said the excess liquidity in the system should give the economy enough room to grow even without the help of a cut in the central bank's overnight rates.

A slowly moving economy is normally prodded by a cut in the central bank's overnight rates that, in turn, usually influences bank lending rates and ideally spurs a more aggressive credit regime.

Even with overnight rates down to 10-year lows of seven percent for borrowing and 9.25 percent for lending, bank lending had remained anemic this year, contracting by more than 2 percent last month.

"Our bringing overnight rates down will not bring treasury bill rates any lower given the government's revenue situation. And there is sufficient room in the current interest rates environment to provide ample liquidity and encourage growth," the BSP chief said.

In effect, Buenaventura ruled out a cut in the BSP policy rates this year even as he said that the Monetary Board would still discuss the possibility of cutting rates during the next policy-setting meeting on Nov. 21. Monetary authorities only discuss policy rates adjustment once every month.

While the US Fed cut is a big factor for monetary authorities, the more important ones are inflation and foreign exchange.

Inflation had averaged at 3.2 percent in the first 10 months of the year while the peso had returned to the high 52 level from 53 to a dollar in previous weeks.

Still, the BSP had been warning of potential pressures that could push consumer prices up, like the El Niño weather phenomenon, the brewing conflict in the Middle East that could push crude oil prices up, and the possibility of a wage hike.

"The peso had been improving but it is still on the high end," according to Buenaventura.

Last week, Buenaventura hinted that monetary authorities might even consider raising the overnight tiering rates to implement a de facto increase in the central bank's policy rates.

"The only thing that a 50 basis points cut that the US Fed would do for us is give us more room to delay the monetary tightening. I am hoping we can delay it as far back as the second half of 2002," he said last week.

Gov't slowing down on free trade efforts

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE MACAPAGAL administration is slowing down on its free trade efforts in the face of a ballooning budget deficit, which has forced government officials to squeeze more income from declining customs collections.

A government source said Malacañang was planning to retain for another year all most favored nation (MFN) tariffs or duties on products from countries outside Asean and defer the token cuts on duties of raw materials not produced locally that it promised to local manufacturers early this year.

This should be a boost to local manufacturers who have been lobbying for a slowdown in tariff cuts and stall the entry of cheap, competing imports.

The source said the government was willing to forego trade liberalization because of its pressing concern on the budget deficit.

The budget deficit soared to a record P166.47 billion in the first nine months, 47 percent higher than the government's projection of P106.33 billion, which has raised fears that the shortfall could top P200 billion this year. This was largely due to a 48-percent

GOV'T/B8

40-YEAR LOWS

US Fed cuts rates sharply

CLERK signals bids in the Eurodollar pit of the Chicago Mercantile Exchange after the Federal Reserve announced a half percentage point drop in the short-term interest rate, Nov. 6, in Chicago. The drop, an effort to reignite the US economy, is a fresh four-decade low.

REUTERS

WASHINGTON—The US Federal Reserve on Wednesday slashed interest rates by a sharp half percentage point to new four-decade lows to try to reignite the recovery, but signaled it planned no more cuts any time soon.

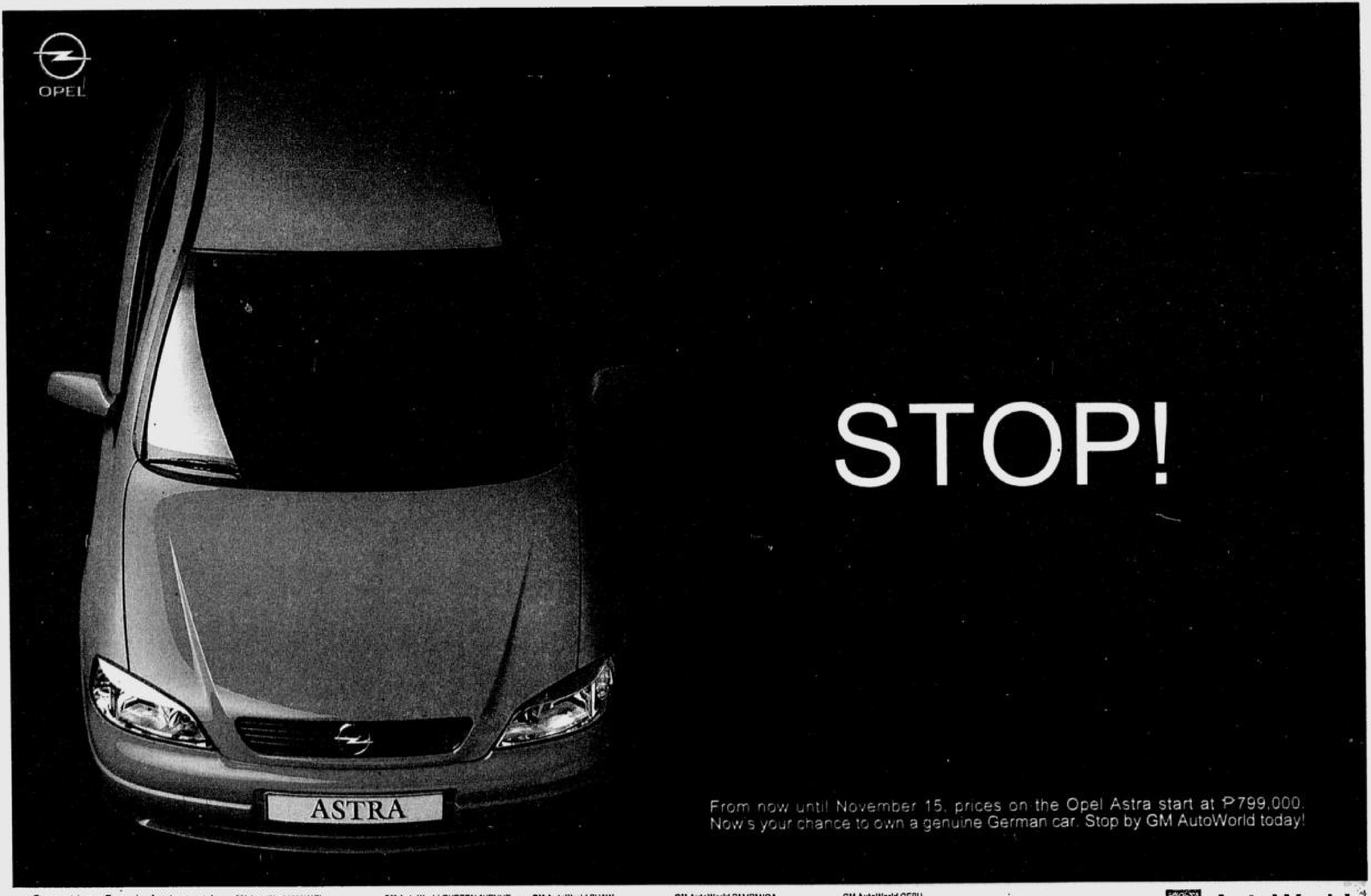
The large drop in borrowing costs startled financial markets expecting a more modest cut.

The central bank's policymakers delivered a second surprise by indicating they are likely to stand pat after the latest reduction, saying economic risks were balanced between weakness and inflation. The latest action should be enough to help the economy through its "soft spot," they said.

The central bank's Federal Open Market Committee voted unanimously to drop the trendsetting federal funds rate that banks charge each other for overnight loans to 1.25 percent. It was the first rate cut this year after 11 reductions in 2001.

The Fed also lowered the more symbolic discount rate it charges for emergency loans to banks by a matching amount to a new record low of 0.75 percent.

US/B2



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Mirant eyes sale of 15% stake in RP to strategic investor

By Abigail L. Ho

SUAL, Pangasinan—Mirant Philippines, the country's biggest independent power producer, will be putting 15 percent of its business on the table for a strategic investor while it waits for the market situation to improve for an initial public offering for another 15 percent of the company.

In a news briefing Thursday, Mirant international senior vice president Rick Keuster disclosed that the possibility of taking in a minority investor had always been on the company's business plan although it would be holding on to a 70-percent stake in the company even after the entry of a new investor and an IPO.

"It has been our objective for quite a while to sell a minority stake through an IPO or bringing in a minority investor," he said.

For the strategic partner, he said it did not matter whether it was a foreign or a local entity, as long as it shared Mirant's objectives and fit well into the company's corporate structure.

"We don't have a bias. We will look at who best fits our corporate culture and who shares our objectives. It doesn't matter which country it is from," he said.

For the IPO, on the other hand, Keuster said it was wholly dependent on the market situation and Mirant was in no hurry to do this.

He added that a lot of thought had to go into preparing for an IPO as it was a complicated matter.

"A lot of work has to be done. We're not rushing into it. It's being done deliberately. We're still looking at the market so there's no specific timetable (as to when we'll be holding an IPO) at this time," he explained.

A company source said a chunk of the 15 percent that would be sold to the public would be sold to institutional investors in big blocks of shares.

These investors could be local, regional or international financial institutions.

Being the biggest IPP in the country, Mirant accounts for a total generating capacity of 2,500 megawatts, through its 1,200-MW Sual coal plant in Pangasinan and 1,250-MW Ilijan gas-fired power plant in Batangas.

Mirant has been operating in the country since the late '80s and it now has ownership interests in six power plants in the country.

After investing almost $2 billion (including financing) in the Philippines, Keuster said Mirant would still be infusing more money into the country but not anymore through new power generation plants.

The IPP would be investing about $20 million in the next couple of years for transmission infrastructure. "The Philippines doesn't need new plants. The $20 million will be for transmission," he said.

PriceSmart sees $100M sales in RP

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

AMERICAN member-shopping chain PriceSmart expects sales in its Philippine operations to remain at a robust $100 million this year despite the weak economy and ebbing consumer confidence.

PriceSmart senior vice president for Asia Benjamin Woods said the Philippines was one of PriceSmart's top performers among 13 countries in Latin America, Caribbean and Asia. The Philippines ranked number 5 in terms of sales behind PriceSmart operations in Costa Rica, Guatemala, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic.

"Warehouse clubs tend to do better in a recession because people still have to eat and consumers buy goods at lower costs," said Woods who expects PriceSmart Philippines to duplicate or improve slightly this year on the turnover of $100 million in 2001.

Asked why PriceSmart was the only major foreign retailer to come into the country since the retail sector was opened in 2000, Woods said other retail giants were looking closely at how PriceSmart would fare in the Philippines before they would come in. He said the Philippines was a viable market for any foreign retailer considering that Metro Manila alone has a population of 10 million.

Woods noted that margins have remained at a healthy 12 percent despite the sluggish economy. He said the addition of more branches has enabled PriceSmart to further lower its prices without affecting margins. Woods said PriceSmart's main drawing power comes from the quality and low-cost, US goods on its shelves that account for 30 percent of all merchandise sold in its warehouse stores.

PriceSmart spends between $7.5 million and $10 million to build each of its branches in the Philippines. Woods said PriceSmart should have five branches by next year—Fort Bonifacio, Pasig City, Quezon City, Alabang and Roxas Boulevard—in line with the first phase of its investment program in the Philippines.

SMALL BUSINESS TALK

Mina T. Gabor, president of the Philippine Small and Medium Business Development Foundation (Philsmed), meets with Minister B.N. Jha (left) of India's Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises and former Sen. Leticia R. Shahani during the Business Opportunities 2003 conference. Philsmed organized the event to start-up alliances on networking among entrepreneurs and large enterprises.

US Fed cuts rates sharply

From page B1

Fortunes have soured quickly for the US economy, with recent data indicating that manufacturing is stalling and a slide in jobs for the past two months.

According to the measure of inflation Fed Chair Alan Greenspan favors, real interest rates are now below zero. Some analysts have warned this means the Fed is nearly out of maneuvering room and that deflation, or a widespread decline in prices, poses a bigger potential threat than inflation.

But the Fed, faced with a wobbling recovery and at least a possibility of deflation if consumers rein in spending, has little choice except to fire its policy bullets and hope it creates a more buoyant mood throughout the economy.

"This move could . . . backfire by announcing to the world that the economy is so weak that Chair Greenspan has to use what little ammunition he has left to shore up the economy," warned economist Sung Won Sohn of Wells Fargo Bank in Minneapolis.

Fed seen on hold

A poll by Reuters of primary dealers—big Wall Street firms that deal directly with the Fed—after the Fed decision found 13 out of 20 expected the central bank to keep rates steady through mid-2003. They were unanimous in expecting steady rates through the end of the year.

Most financial market participants had expected a more modest quarter-point cut and for the Fed to retain its warning that further weakness was the greatest economic threat.

Bonds and stocks gyrated in the aftermath of the move, torn between relief at the bold Fed action and worry that it meant policymakers felt the situation was bleaker than thought.

After seesawing from positive to negative and back, the Dow Jones Industrial rallied 92.74 points, or more than one percent, to close at 8,771. The technology-laden Nasdaq Composite index gained 17.82 points, or about 1.3 percent, to 1,418.99 for a sixth straight session of increases.

Bond prices also cycled through plus and minus territory, with traders believing that the shift in the balance of risks spelled the end of the central bank's easing cycle.

"Go out and spend"

"Their message to consumers and firms is—we're fundamentally okay, we understand there are geopolitical risks, but go out and spend," said economist James Padinha of Arnhold and S. Bleichroeder Inc. in Los Angeles. "If we're on the path to disaster, saving ammunition won't matter anyway."

For a second policy-setting meeting in a row, the Fed cited uncertainties stemming from a possible war with Iraq, saying these were holding the economy back.

"Incoming economic data have tended to confirm that greater uncertainty, in part attributable to heightened geopolitical risks, is currently inhibiting spending, production and employment," the central bank said in a statement.

"The committee believes that today's additional monetary easing should prove helpful as the economy works its way through this current soft spot," it added.

Analysts said the Fed's dramatic decision appeared aimed not only at dealing with current weakness but also offering reassurance that the worst might be past. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Thursday, November 7, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	7,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	18.5	19	18.5	19	157,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43.5	44	43.5	43.5	497,400
China Banking Corp.	620	625	620	625	1,790
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	26	27	26	27	275,100
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	32	31	31.5	342,000
Philippine National Bank	28	28	28	28	61,900
Security Bank Corp.	11.75	11.75	11.75	11.75	6,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	18.5	18.5	18.25	18.25	24,000
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	7,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.38	0.42	0.38	0.42	50,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1200	1200	1200	1200	730
Sun Life Financial Serv.	925	925	925	925	1,140
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17.25	17.5	17.25	17.5	25,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.41	0.44	0.41	0.44	2,180,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	427.5	427.5	410	425	235,610
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	1,200,000
ISM Communications Corp..	0.017	0.019	0.017	0.019	2,500,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.75	3.8	3.75	3.8	12,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	228	235	227	235	415,410
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.5	15	14.5	15	17,600
Manila Electric Co. B	20	20.5	19.75	20.5	1,703,300
Petron Corp.	1.58	1.64	1.58	1.64	4,417,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.26	2.34	2.26	2.34	810,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	80,000
William, Gothong & Aboitiz	3.2	3.3	3.2	3.3	16,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Alsons Cement Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.6	3.6	3.6	3.6	2,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	14	14	14	14	262,400
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	31,800
RFM Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	180,000
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58.5	57.5	58.5	100,600
San Miguel Corp. B	63.5	65	63.5	64.5	1,276,400
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.8	4.85	4.75	4.85	4,144,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.42	2.44	2.42	2.44	116,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	1,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.48	2.48	15,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.205	0.215	0.2	0.215	3,620,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.13	0.13	150,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	500,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.18	0.14	0.18	1,240,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	7,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	13.5	13.5	13.5	13.5	324,300
Global Equities Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	1,000,000
Ionics Inc.	1.94	2.02	1.94	2	560,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.3	1.38	1.3	1.34	497,000
Keppel Holdings	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	70,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	3,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.63	0.66	0.63	0.66	1,450,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.225	0.245	0.225	0.245	4,630,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.041	0.041	0.041	0.041	1,800,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.84	1.9	1.82	1.9	22,647,000
Interphil Labs Inc. B	1.86	1.9	1.86	1.9	36,680,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	6	6	6	6	1,000
Macondray Plastics Inc.	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55	1,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	5,200
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.38	1,040,000
Acesita Phils Hotel Corp.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	10,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	170,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	17.75	17.75	17.5	17.5	730,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	101,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5	5.1	5	5.1	7,586,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	80,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.155	0.165	0.155	0.16	910,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.92	0.96	0.92	0.96	12,590,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	30,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	300,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.7	5.9	5.7	5.8	7,192,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	3,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	200,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	310,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	10,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	4,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	3,000,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,000,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,433,560	48,225,350.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	102,525,811	487,097,509.00
PRO	28,788,000	92,129,250.00
Mining	3,520,000	104,600.00
OIL	10,000,000	48,400.00
GRAND TOTALS:	146,267,371	627,605,109.00
AVERAGES		
Bank & Fin Svc	420.55	UP 4.33
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,488.44	UP 26.98
PRO	488.16	UP 12.85
Mining	1,097.11	UNCH 0.00
OIL	1.25	DOWN 0.08
All Shares Index	632.47	UP 7.36
Composite	1,083.60	UP 23.16

NO. OF ADVANCES: 37; NO. OF DECLINES: 12; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 33; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 82; NO. OF TRADES: 1,932

DISCLOSURES

DIVERSIFIED Financial Network Inc. has announced that its 14.8 million common shares previously locked up are already tradable.

* * *

LA TONDEÑA Distillers Inc. has bought a total of 176,700 of its own shares at prices ranging from P32 to P32.50 per share.

* * *

MACONDRAY Plastics Inc. has bought 1,000 of its own shares at P2.55 per share.

* * *

SOLID Group Inc. will hold its special stockholders' meeting on Nov. 21, 10 a.m. at the Fairways of Manila Golf and Country Club, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of Aug. 24 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

SALCON Power Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Nov. 25, 10 a.m. at the Manila Polo Club, Makati City. Only stockholders of record as of Oct. 30 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting.

* * *

GLOBAL Business Holdings Inc. has announced the resignation of Noel Jose as director of the company. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

Nov. 7, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.997009	1	52.903
Japan	Yen	0.00818	0.008205	0.4341
United Kingdom	Pound	1.559222	1.5639	82.735
Hongkong	Dollar	0.127839	0.128223	6.7834
Switzerland	Franc	0.68396	0.686012	36.2921
Canada	Dollar	0.642278	0.644205	34.0804
Singapore	Dollar	0.564718	0.566412	29.9649
Australia	Dollar	0.55952	0.561199	29.6891
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.644727	2.652661	140.3337
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.265869	0.266667	14.1075
Brunei	Dollar	0.563123	0.564812	29.8802
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000109	0.000109	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.023068	0.023137	1.224
Uae	Dirham	0.27145	0.272264	14.4036
Euro	Euro	1	1.003	53.0617
Argentina	Peso	0.282439	0.283286	14.9867
Brazil	Real	0.275645	0.276472	14.6262
Denmark	Kroner	0.134631	0.135035	7.1438
India	Rupee	0.020659	0.020721	1.0962
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.262406	0.263193	13.9237
Mexico	New Peso	0.097933	0.098227	5.1965
New Zealand	Dollar	0.493519	0.495	26.187
Norway	Kroner	0.135807	0.136214	7.2061
Pakistan	Rupee	0.017043	0.017094	0.9043
South Africa	Rand	0.100932	0.101235	5.3556
Korea	Won	0.000815	0.000817	0.0432
Sweden	Kroner	0.109579	0.109908	5.8145
Syria	Pound	0.022556	0.022624	1.1969
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.028865	0.028952	1.5316
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000725	0.000727	0.0385

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MVP's 'death' sentence

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

METRO Pacific/PLDT CEO Manuel V. Pangilinan thanked his lucky stars and supporters yesterday with a "1st MVP Pasasalamat Golf Tournament" at the Southwoods, apparently to celebrate having thwarted the Gokongwei takeover attempt.

But the good tidings may be short-lived, considering the e-mailed statement from Hong Kong that we received yesterday.

The message, from the sender who wishes to be identified publicly only as "a senior executive close to MVP," was sent in reaction to a brief item that appeared here on Oct. 25, claiming that MVP and First Pacific principal Anthoni Salim have been talking again.

Here's the unedited message:

MVP and his cronies are like prisoners on death row waiting for the death sentence to be carried out.

MVP and Anthoni Salim, in spite of MVP's repeated attempts to arrange for a meeting, have not spoken to each other.

MVP is scheduled to meet the press this afternoon, together with retiring Nestlé CEO Juan B. Santos, to discuss a most laudable project being undertaken by PLDT, Nestlé, and other top Philippine corporations, urban poverty reduction program.

So, please, ladies and gentlemen of the press, behave yourselves and do not besiege the two CEOs with extraneous questions.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho will also be there. No questions about Christie's, Sotheby's, or an alleged slapping incident, okay?

AY's French fried

TAIPAN Alfonso Yuchengco's EEI Construction and its French partner have been fined a whopping P634 million in damages for the year-long delay in the construction of the exclusive Pacific Plaza Towers.

The Construction Industry Arbitration Commission handed down the record fine last month, said to be the biggest meted out in the industry, but the news only filtered out to the unit owners of the country's most expensive condo units this week when developer Metro Pacific Corp. started sending out advisories to the PPT tenants.

EEI and its French partner, SAE, have committed to deliver the twin tower, 52-story condos at The Fort in August 2000, but delivered the building a year and a month later.

This prompted the cash-strapped Metro Pacific to sue, with the EEI-French combine retaliating by having the Rizal Registry of Deeds attach lis pendens (pending lawsuit) on the condo titles.

The lis pendens, in effect a buyer beware, should now be lifted, following the arbitration commission's ruling that they had been attached illegally, according to Metro Pacific.

EEI and its French partner, in the meantime, have signified their intention to file an appeal.

Flush with victory, Metro Pacific is embarking on a renewed sales drive to finally dispose of the remaining 25-percent unsold units of its signature project.

Among the VIPs who now consider it a home include the ageless Minnie Osmeña (no less than in one of the four penthouses), lawyers Leonardo Siguion Reyna and F. Arthur Villaraza, EEI chair/former Trade Secretary Rizalino Navarro, MVP of course (plus a few lucky PLDT/MPC executives, if we are to believe the First Pacific spin), and the current playboy-of-the-month, investment banker Noel Escaler.

Heard through the grapevine

NEW LTO chief Roberto Lastimoso is moving up the social ladder, and is now applying for playing rights that should enable him to improve his golf at the members-only Wack Wack.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

World Bank backs more powers for Bangko Sentral

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD Bank favors the legislation of stronger powers for the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to intervene in cash-strapped banks as part of further reforms to improve the country's regulatory and supervisory framework.

In a regional report on East Asia released Wednesday night, the bank said additional fundamental reforms were needed in the Philippines to deal with problem banks "in a more timely and effective way."

Under the present system, local regulatory authorities face various obstacles in taking over and closing banks because they are not explicitly empowered to intervene in distressed banks without shareholder approval, the report noted.

"This situation makes it difficult for the central bank to be as effective as it might be in enforcing prudential regulations, and creates a situation where bank owners may not face sufficient incentives to properly manage their risks," the report said.

"To improve the regulatory and supervisory framework, the banking authorities would need stronger legislative authority to intervene in distressed banks without fear of undue legal repercussions," it stressed.

A few years ago, the central bank lost in a court battle over thrift bank Banco Filipino, as the Supreme Court reversed its "arbitary" shutdown order.

Meanwhile, the report also said the implementation of a "comprehensive and consolidated" supervisory framework, incorporating risk-focused surveillance and examination techniques, should address the risks inherent in the Philippine banking sector, which is dominated by financial conglomerates.

In this regard, the BSP has entered into a memorandum of agreement with the Securities and Exchange Commission to facilitate tighter review of activities of certain financial groups.

To mitigate against future problems, the report noted that the BSP had been strengthening Bank of International Settlements (BIS) capital standards since July 2001 and had required banks to report their accounts on a consolidated basis starting September 2001. To tighten provisioning requirements and regulatory oversight, banks are required to reappraise their foreclosed assets every two years beginning January 2002.

It was also noted that the Philippines had not adopted a centralized arrangement for dealing with non-performing loans and repossessed assets on the books of the banks.

PRULINK PRU LIFE U.K.

VARIABLE LIFE	Current Week November 05, 2002	Last Week October 29, 2002
Prulink Bond Fund	1.02814	1.02861
Prulink Managed Fund	1.00581	1.00663

* Note PRULINK Funds were launched last September 18, 2002

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GLOBE TELECOM

RHI named SRA, Philsurin partner for sugar program

By Elena R. Torrijos

PUBLICLY listed Roxas Holdings Inc., formerly known as Central Azucarera Don Pedro, yesterday said it was appointed by the Sugar Regulatory Administration and the Philippine Sugar Research Institute as their first partner organization in the implementation of the agriculture department's Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Fund program for the modernization of the sugar industry in Luzon.

The SRA and Philsurin selected RHI to oversee the program worth P42.1 million because of the latter's farm productivity initiatives in the provinces of Batangas, Cavite, Laguna and Quezon and its compliance with world-class sugar manufacturing standards.

The program involves the mechanization of sugarcane farming operations and the improvement of the farm road networks in Nasugbu and other sugar producing areas in the whole milling district.

RHI's Batangas sugar manufacturing plant, as the lead organization of the CADP Mill District Development Foundation, will administer and implement the program in cooperation with various planters associations in the district.

For the first phase of the program, Agirculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor and SRA chair James Ledesma turned over to RHI 16 John Deere farm tractors complete with ancillary implements for land preparation and planting for deployment to sugar planters covering an aggregate area of nearly 30,000 hectares.

CADP was renamed RHI in line with its program to consolidate its sugar businesses and to transform it into a diversified holding and investment corporation.

The consolidation program involves the spin-off of its Batangas sugar business to a subsidiary that will, in turn, be integrated with its 73 percent subsidiary, Central Azucarera de La Carlota. It is now in the last stages of implementation.

Managerial demotion held illegal

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

THE LATEST ruling of the Supreme Court is bad news to employers who fail to exercise due diligence in dealing with their employees, particularly managerial personnel, who are demoted and unduly deprived of their benefits. The highest court condemns such unfairness as tantamount to constructive dismissal, which means that the management's unfair acts are construed as equivalent to illegal dismissal. The victim was ordered reinstated with full back wages.

This was in the case of Globe Telecom Inc., et al vs. Joan Florendo-Flores (GR 150092). The unanimous ruling, penned by Senior Associate Justice Josue Bellosillo, was promulgated on Sept. 27, 2002. Employers can learn a lot of lessons from this landmark decision. In fairness to Globe, however, this may just be an exceptional case and may not illustrate the well-respected leadership style of the Ayala Group.

Justice for managers

The annals of Philippine labor jurisprudence are filled with tales of lowly workers who are dismissed, demoted, laid off and eased out by sheer vindictiveness, ill will and irrationality of certain managerial decisions. But seldom are the sufferings of executives and managers ever recorded because people of higher rank do not usually seek redress for their pent-up grievances.

This case, however, is an exception because Ms J.F. Flores really stood firm in fighting for her right even against the superior legal expertise, vast financial resources and perhaps goodwill and influence of a giant conglomerate to which her employer company belongs. This also illustrates that justice is for all regardless of rank, economic status and power in Philippine society. This is also good news for managers who might have been equally if not more deceptively victimized by unscrupulous employers.

Acts of injustice

In her affidavit, the lady complained that her boss refused to accomplish her performance evaluation report, thereby depriving her of salary increases, bonuses and other incentives. What was worse, she was allegedly demoted from being senior account manager, to a house-to-house selling agent. She was not supported in her sales programs and recommendations and her per diem, representation allowances, car maintenance and other benefits were supposedly withheld from her.

Globe averred that she was on Awol and that her allegations were false. But the arbiter did not believe Globe. He ordered reinstatement, back wages of P307,625, exemplary damages of P200,000 and 10-percent attorney's fees. The NLRC modified the ruling by deducting P63,000 for the value of the car in possession of complainant.

Constructive dismissal

The Court of Appeals held that Flores was in effect dismissed from her job. Globe went to the Supreme Court for relief. Instead of granting Globe's plea, the high tribunal affirmed the ruling and held that what Globe did could be construed as illegal dismissal.

The court, citing precedents, defines constructive dismissal "as cessation of work because continued employment is rendered impossible, unreasonable or unlikely xxx a demotion in rank and a diminution of pay."

Acts equal to dismissal

The Supreme Court discerned a pattern in management's acts against Flores, being singled out and edged out by unbearable or undesirable treatment, diminishing her stature by assigning her to house-to-house sales and withholding from her the enjoyment of bonuses, allowances and other similar benefits.

The court held: "This was tantamount to demotion. She might not have suffered any diminution in her basic salary but the petitioners (the company) did not dispute her allegation that she was deprived of all benefits due to her rank and position, benefits which she apparently used to receive."

Limits to transfers

While the Supreme Court cannot deprive Globe of its prerogative to transfer, the manner of exercise of such prerogative must not be unfair and violative of the basic rights of employees. Employers must act with justice, give everyone his due and observe honesty and good faith.

The court said: "The managerial prerogative to transfer must be exercised without grave abuse of discretion. It must always bear in mind the basic elements of justice and fair play xxx Thus, it cannot be used to rid himself of an undesirable worker."

No abandonment

The court did not accept Globe's theory that the lady abandoned her job, saying: "The unauthorized absences of respondent should not lead to the drastic conclusion that she had chosen to abandon her work. To constitute abandonment, there must be: (a) failure to report for work or absence without valid or justifiable reasons; and (b) a clear intention xxx to sever employer-employee relationship."

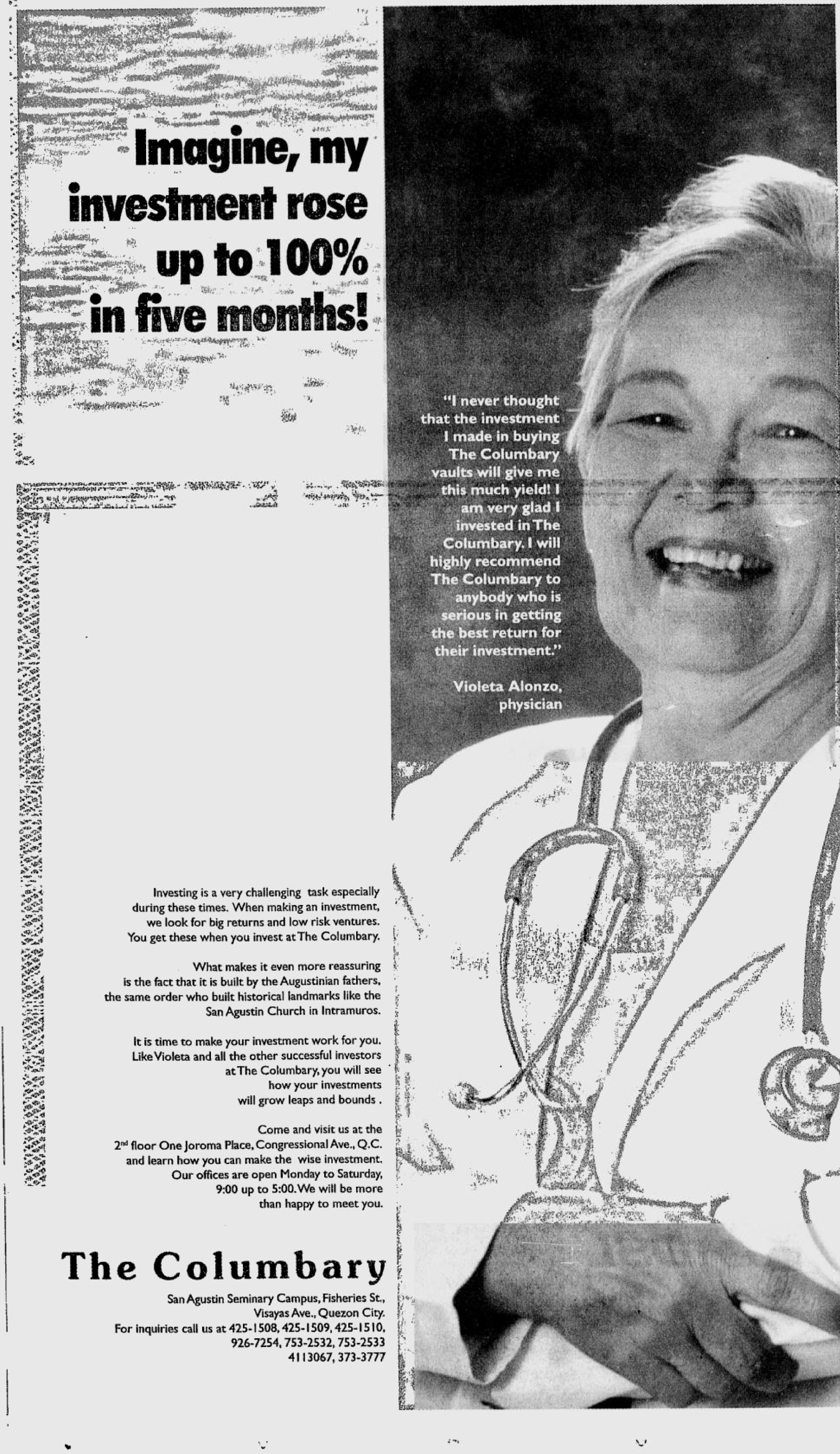
The court held that these elements were negated by the immediate filing of a constructive dismissal. "A charge of abandonment is totally inconsistent with the immediate filing of a complaint for illegal dismissal, more so, when it includes a prayer for reinstatement."

In fairness to Globe

Globe tried to argue that the company should not be held to account for the wrong committed by Flores' superiors. The high court however did not accept this defense. Quoting the arbiter, the court held: "Respondent company was negligent in monitoring all its key personnel. For it is the bounden duty of the corporate officialdom to constantly monitor the managerial staff xxx which includes interpersonal relation. xxx"

While command responsibility is a military principle, it was applied here by the Supreme Court. In fairness to Globe, this writer knows many of its executives and HR managers to be humane, compassionate and highly professional. It's unfortunate that this case should find the disapproval of the highest court of the land. But that's how the cookie crumbles. So, let us all learn from this.

Managerial personnel also enjoy security of tenure. They can't be dismissed without due process.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Yields of T-bonds fall, market cheers Fed cut

YIELDS on treasury bonds, specially the two- to five-year paper, fell about 10 to 20 basis points at the secondary market yesterday as banks cheered the 50 basis point cut in US interest rates, which effectively made peso assets more attractive than dollar assets.

Dealers said the market's rally was likely to be temporary and they expect the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to keep its rates unchanged to protect the peso.

There were done deals in two- to five-year papers, with banks making aggressive bids partly due also to the high liquidity in the market.

The two-year paper was transacted at 8.65 percent, three-year at 9 percent, four-year at 10 percent and five-year at 10.7 percent.

"Even if the central bank said it won't cut rates, the market took that as good news. Definitely, the fear before that the central bank may raise rates because of the depreciating peso was lifted," said a dealer from a local bank.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said in an interview with local ANC television that the Fed's decision to cut rates reinforced the bank's decision to keep a neutral stance, and "probably extends the life of our neutral stance."

The central bank has not cut its own overnight rates since March this year. The borrowing rate currently stands at a 10-year low of 7.0 percent and the lending rate at 9.25 percent.

"They (central bank) are not in a position

YIELDS/ B8

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE STOCKHOLDERS OF EASYCALL COMMUNICATIONS PHILIPPINES, INC.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Meeting of the Stockholders of **EASYCALL COMMUNICATIONS PHILIPPINES, INC.** will be held at the **LIGHTHOUSE THEATRE** (inside TDG-NYK Harbor Centre) at the 25th corner A.C. Delgado Streets, Port Area, Manila on November 12, 2002, Tuesday at 4:00 PM.

The **AGENDA** for the meeting shall be as follows:

1. Call to Order;
2. Certification by the Corporate Secretary on the sending of notices and existence of a quorum;
3. Reading and Approval of Minutes of the last annual meeting of stockholders;
4. Report of the Chairman of the Board;
5. Financial Report and Approval of Financial Statements for the Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2002;
6. Ratification of Actions and Decisions taken by the Board of Directors and Officers of the Corporation since the last annual meeting of the stockholders;
7. Approval of the Increase in the Number of the Members of the Board of Directors from Seven (7) to Nine (9) and Amending for this purpose Article VI of the Articles of Incorporation and Section 9 of the Company's By-Laws.
8. Election of Directors;
9. Appointment of External Auditors;
10. Transaction of such other matters as may properly come before the meeting;
11. Ajournment

The Record Date for determination of stockholders entitled to notice of, and to vote at the meeting shall be October 16, 2002. Only stockholders of record as of said date are entitled to vote and be voted during the meeting.

Registration for the meeting shall commence at 3:30 P.M. on November 12, 2002 at the above venue. If you cannot personally attend the meeting and would like to be represented by a proxy, a written and signed copy of the proxy must be received by the Corporate Secretary at the ECPI office address at 418 Arayat corner Libertad Streets, Mandaluyong City, not later than forty eight (48) hours before the time set for holding the meeting.

A copy of the Annual Report of the Corporation for the last fiscal year and SEC Forms 17-A and 17-IS filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission had been sent.

(Sgd.) **MA. ROMELA M. BENGZON**
Corporate Secretary

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4:00 - 5:00pm Code Red & Red Alert Vehicle Security System .... by: Miles & Levels Phils:

NOVEMBER 9 (SAT.)
2:00 - 3:00pm Driving Tips On How to be Fuel Efficient .... by: ISUZU Phils. Corp.
4:00 - 5:00pm Code Red & Red Alert Vehicle Security System .... by: Miles & Levels Phils.

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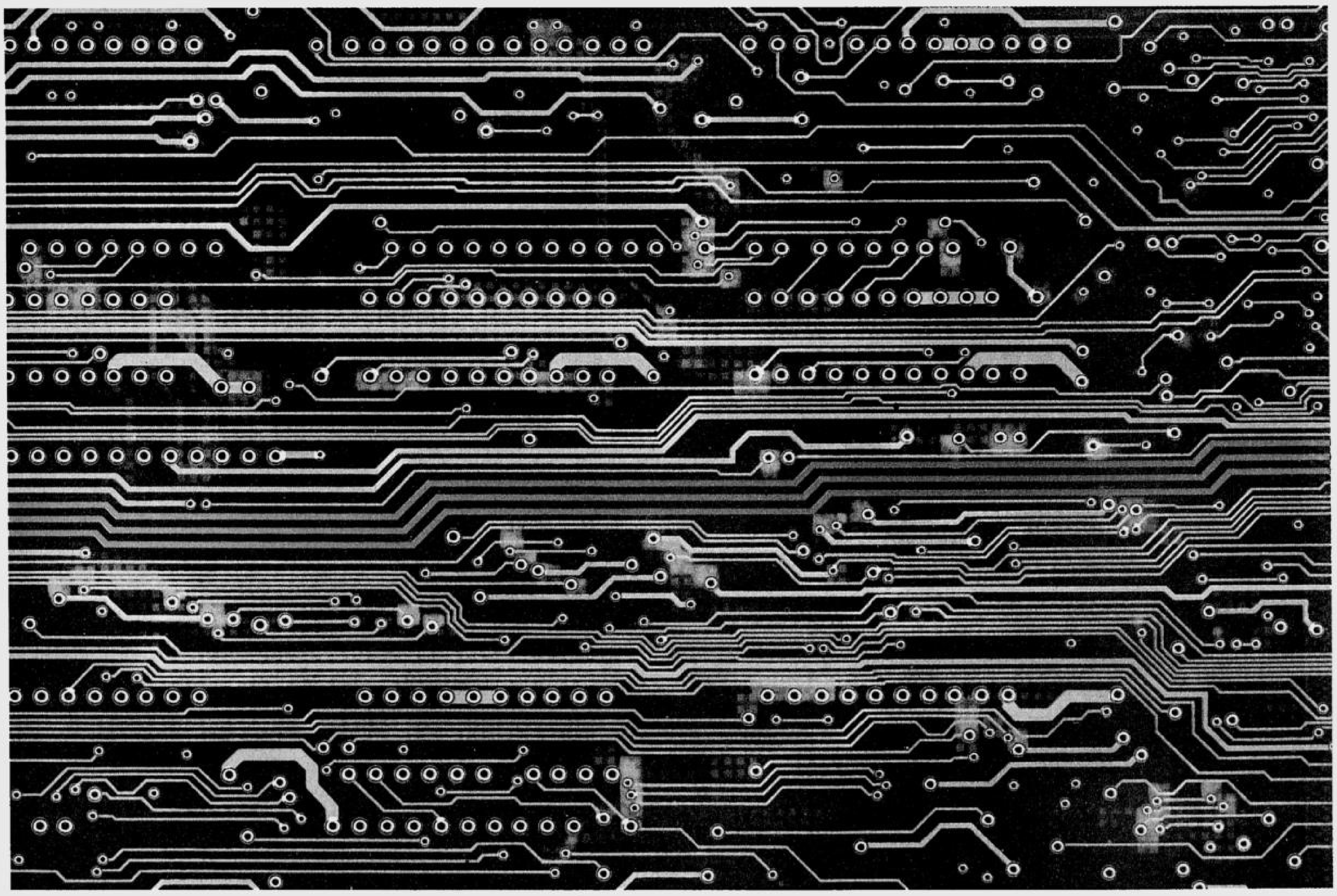

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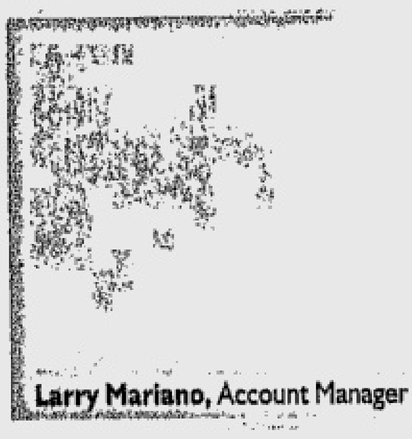
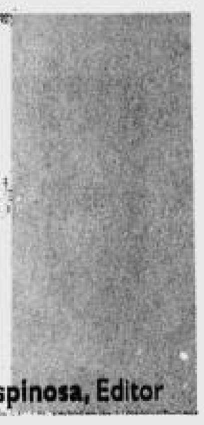

Larry Mariano, Account Manager

AIR LIQUIDE
100 years. A pioneering inspiration
www.airliquide.com


Aries Espinosa, Editor

AIR LIQUIDE GROUP

100 years. A pioneering inspiration

By Joel V. Nigos

WHEN the idea of liquefying air to obtain pure oxygen was mooted by French engineer Georges Claude, it was a time of uncertainty. It was also the turn of the century when skepticism hovered over the horizon. So when he brought forth his idea, it was expected that it would be met with the same cynical response. Financial backers were scarce. Fortunately, individuals who shared his vision provided help, in particular Paul Delorme, his fellow pupil at the Ecole Superieur de Physique et Chimie Industrielle (Physics and Industrial Chemistry School) in Paris. They dreamt of producing oxygen on an industrial scale. The year was 1899.

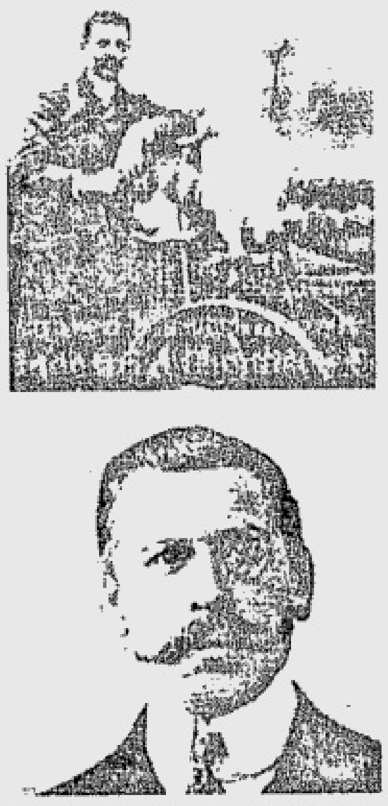
Humble beginnings

Claude worked as an engineer by day for the Thomson Houston Company. In the evenings, he carried out tests in a depot lent to him by his employer.

The research effort considerably exceeded his personal resources. On May 6, 1899, with a start-up capital of just 7,500 Francs, Claude and Delorme founded an association.

Their perseverance was rewarded when only after three years of hard work, and for the very first time, liquid air came out of the equipment.

It was Nov. 8, 1902, when Air Liquide, a corporation under French law ("societe anonyme") for the Study and Exploitation of the Georges Claude processes, was launched—with 100,000 Francs equity subscribed by 26 shareholders. That was the start of Air Liquide, and Paul Delorme was its first chairman. By 1906, the company was starting to develop outside France, in Belgium, Italy, Japan and Canada. The pioneering spirit was already under way.


Air Liquide founders, Georges Claude and Paul Delorme.

The establishment of Air Liquide marked the start of an awesome industrial adventure, which is also a marvelous human venture. The two associates were far from imagining that their work would result in the development of an international company.

Through the years, the pioneering spirit of the two founders has been passed down through the company's history. It has survived technical challenges, made the most of the opportunities out of these trying times, and came out with remarkable innovations which is now part of its rich 100-year history.

Now celebrating its 100 years, Air Liquide is indeed "a pioneering inspiration" to the world. More than a phrase, "a pioneering inspiration" perfectly sums up the spirit in which the company intends to celebrate its 100 years: innovation and the future.

A century of experience

Air Liquide is the first company to invent and pioneer the separation of air through cryogenics. With one-fifth of the global market share, it is at present the world's largest industrial gas company. Some of the industrial gases it provides are oxygen, nitrogen, argon, hydrogen, carbon dioxide, among others.

Through its various products and services, it was able to improve the various industries of its customers. These industries can be as varied as steel and oil refining, chemistry and glass, electronics and paper, metallurgy and food processing, healthcare and aerospace. It has and has always been in pursuit of protecting the environment.

Air Liquide Philippines

Recognizing the need of expanding overseas and to be of more service to mankind, it entered the Philippine market in 1997. It brought with it almost a century's worth of experience in providing gas products and the most stringent quality control and safety systems. This reflects Air Liquide's concern of the growing importance of certain regions within the global economy, such as eastern Europe and Asia.

AIR LIQUIDE
PHILIPPINES

It earned the respect of the industry. in a short period of time and eventually became one of the country's top industrial manufacturers.

John Lok, Air Liquide Phils. President and CEO

By operating the most modern industrial gas plant and refilling center in the Philippines, it received its ISO 9002 Certification in February 2001.

It has worked hand in hand with the Air Liquide Group as it strives for the achievement of its strategic drives such as sustainable development and the environment, health and hygiene, and advanced technologies.

John Lok, President and CEO of Air Liquide Philippines Inc., says that when the global economy starts to pick up again, the Philippines, including many countries in the region, will have huge potential for growth. He added that despite the recent economic slowdown, the average growth rate among economies in Southeast Asia is still among the highest in the world.

"With its strong presence in the Philippines, Air Liquide will be able to leverage on this growth and introduce new technologies to enhance productivity, better protect the environment and ensure sustainable development," Lok says.

According to Lok, Air Liquide Philippines contributes to the country's economy because a significant portion of Air Liquide's customers are in the electronics sector.

"Electronic products account for about 68 percent of total exports from the Philippines, making it a significant contributor to the economy. We also want to be part of their contribution by working hand in hand with them and by providing their needs," he says.

Air Liquide's efforts and investment in better environmental protection, improving productivity, he adds, should also therefore contribute in further enhancing the overall competitiveness of the industry.

Lok says Air Liquide Philippines will continue to adhere to the policy of the Air Liquide Group which has always been based on respect for its employees, its customers, and its shareholders.

"This has been and will remain the focus of Air Liquide Philippines in the years to come," Lok says.

As part of Air Liquide's 100-year anniversary celebration, Air Liquide Phils. Inc. has come up with activities in line with the Group's pioneering inspiration.

On July 10, 2002, Air Liquide Philippines sponsored the staging of Repertory Philippines' "Visiting Mr. Green" at the Carlos P. Romulo Theater, RCBC Plaza in Makati City which aimed to show appreciation to the company's partners in the business—the customers. Incoming President and CEO John Lok, incumbent President and CEO Woo Siew Wah, the company's three vice presidents, Messrs. Fulton Gador, Joffrey Manaid, and Julian Gonzales, Air Liquide Regional HR Director William Eng, Air Liquide Philippines employees, sponsors and customers were all there to grace the event. During the said affair, an exhibit was also put up for customers to see the evolution of Air Liquide both globally and locally.

Air Liquide Philippines also tied up with ABS-CBN Bantay Kalikasan's "Save the La Mesa Watershed Project." Dubbed as the "Adopt-A-Tree/Adopt-A-Hectare Project," it is an activity wherein the company adopted one hectare of land at the La Mesa Dam Reservation Area where 400 trees were planted as a commitment to leave a legacy of clean air and clean water to the Filipino children. The management team and employees from various departments participated in the said activity joined by officials and employees of the Bantay Kalikasan Group. The tree planting activity was held Aug. 27, 2002.

The Air Liquide Philippines 100-Years Committee also joined hand-in-hand with the Land Transportation Office (LTO) and again with ABS-CBN Bantay Kalikasan's Bantay Usok Project. Roadside apprehension was done at the People Power Monument in the morning of Aug. 28, 2002. Afterwhich, smoke emission testing was then conducted at the company's Pasig plant. The joint effort was a direct offshoot of the highly successful "Yes to Clean Air Signature Campaign" in 1999 to ratify the Clean Air Act. "Bantay Usok" is the only NGO unit deputized to apprehend smoke belchers. The project aims to create awareness about the effect of air pollution and tries to do its share in helping Metro Manila residents breathe clean air not just for the present but also for future generations.

And to culminate the 100-year celebration in the Philippines dinner dance party organized exclusively for Air Liquide Philippines employees will be held on Nov. 8, 2002 at the Discovery Suites in Ortigas. A film specially made for the Group's employees will also be shown during the party. The "Best Of" film will present the highlights of the celebrations, particularly those of the Innovation Tour in its travels in each continent and the multitude of local celebrations the company has organized.

The Air Liquide Group

Air Liquide is a global provider of industrial and medical gases and related services. By staying at the vanguard of technological leadership, Air Liquide provides its customers all over the world with new products, services and solutions. Founded in 1902, Air Liquide has 130 subsidiaries in more than 65 countries and employs around 30,800 people. Sales in 2001 totaled 8,328 million euros, with revenue outside of France accounting for 77 percent. Air Liquide is listed on the Paris Stock Exchange and is a component of the CAC 40 and the EuroStoxx 50 indexes (Euroclear 12007).

Air Liquide is the first company to invent the separation of air through cryogenics

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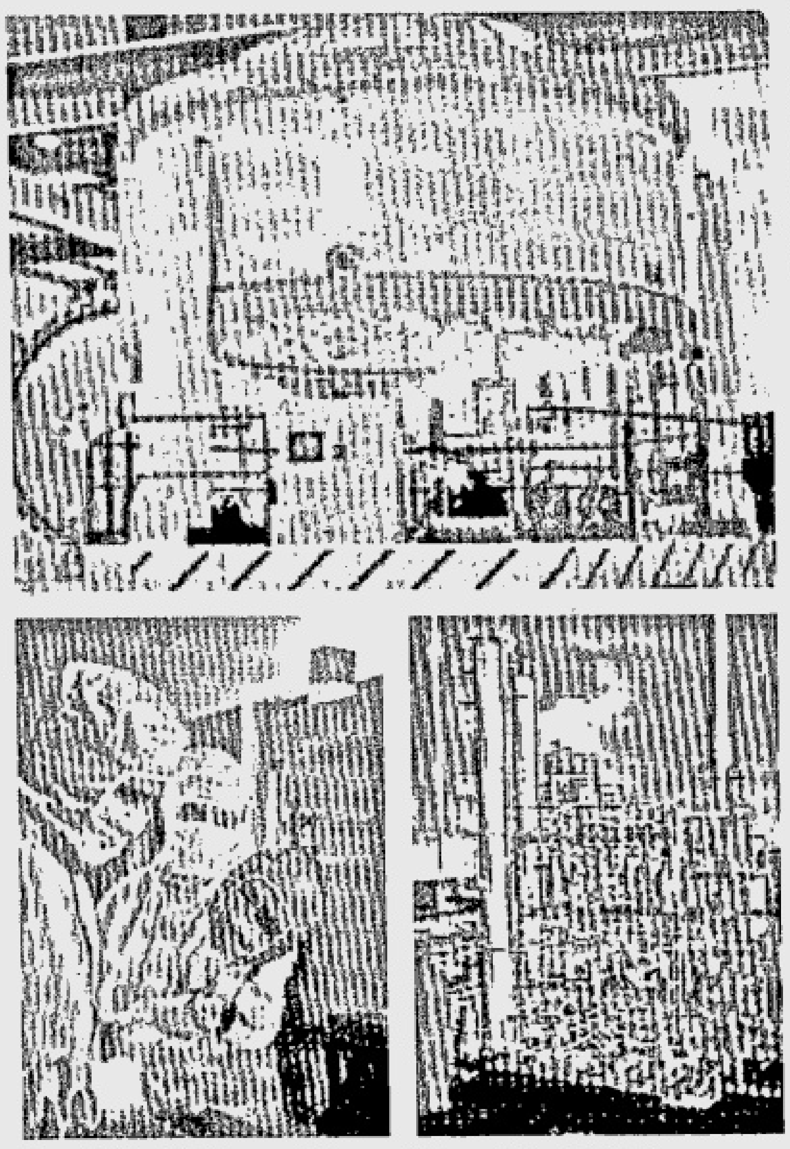
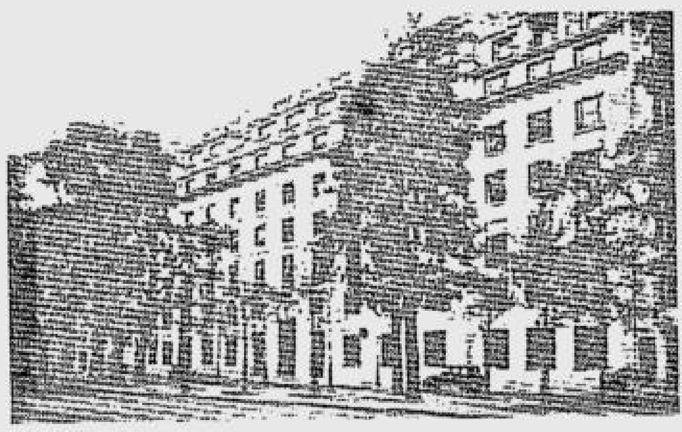

The Air Liquide Group: A journey through the century.

AIR Liquide Philippines in support of Bantay Kalikasan's "Save the La Mesa Watershed" project.
ABS-CBN Bantay Kalikasan
Save the La Mesa Watershed Project

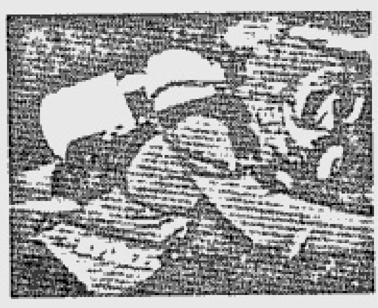
A pioneering tradition

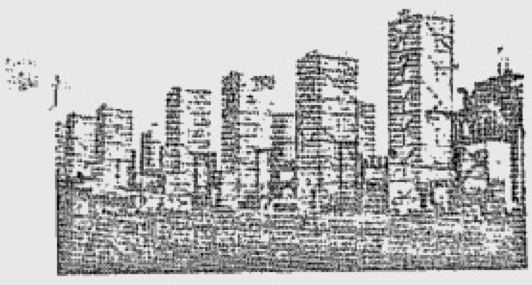
Since the beginning of the 20th century, innovations and technical challenges have come one after the other. We take a quick look at the major stages in the history of Air Liquide.

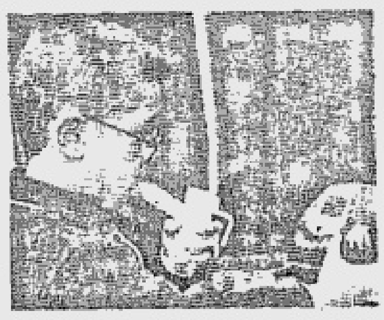
Reprinted from Alize Magazine
April 2002

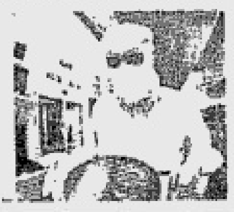


AIR Liquide headquarters in Paris, France









1902

Creation of Air Liquide. Its corporate mission – L'Air Liquide, societe pour l'etude et l'exploitation des procedes Georges Claude (a company dedicated to researching and exploiting the processes of Georges Claude) – immediately makes its vocation clear: innovation.

1913

The company is first quoted on the Paris stock exchange. By this time Air Liquide is already present in Belgium, Sweden, Spain, Canada, Russia, Germany, Italy, Greece, and the Far East.

1931

The adventures in welding begin and Air Liquide's headquarters is established at 75, quai d'Orsay, Paris.

1946

Diving under the sea. Emile Gagnan, an "in-house" engineer and explorer Jacques-Yves Cousteau invent a regulator which allows divers to breathe under water using oxygen cylinders. Spirotechnique is founded to manufacture and market the invention.

1952

Fifty years old and a watershed is reached: With oxygen cylinders no longer meeting the needs of industrial customers, the company begins distribution in liquid form in cryogenic tankers which, volume for volume, can hold much more oxygen.

1960

With the opening of a plant in the Lorraine region, France, producing 150 metric tons of oxygen per day and supplying clients via pipeline, Air Liquide enters the tonnage era.

1962

A research center is established in Sassenage (Isere, France). With its studies into cryogenics, Air Liquide becomes a major contributor to the European space program.

1970

The Claude-Delorme Research Center opens in Loges-en-Josas, France. One of its aims is to develop applications for specific markets, such as food-processing.

1976

Air Liquide lands the contract of the century, delivering 6 oxygen production units with an unrivaled capacity (2300 mt./day of oxygen each to South African petrochemicals group, Sasol. This number has now grown to 14, with the 15th unit due to begin operating in 2003 with a capacity of 3550 mt./day.

1985

The Group makes its debut on the electronics market and establishes an electronics research center in Tsukuba (Japan).

1989

Another major watershed, this time with the development of a technique for separating gases from air using membrane technology instead of cryogenics.

1995

Air Liquide Sante is created, grouping together all of the Group's medical business, both hospital care and homecare.

2002

100 years old and three major strategic drives: sustainable development and the environment, health and hygiene, and advanced technologies, particularly related to electronics and to the environment, such as the fuel cell.

Air Liquide Philippines Inc. would like to thank the following

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Gov't slowing down ...

From page B1

shortfall in revenue collections by the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Bureau of Customs.

The source said Malacañang was keen on maintaining the current MFN tariffs up to next year in 2003, the third straight year that the duty cuts have been deferred. The Tariff Commission, which has recently asked Malacañang for policy direction, is currently reviewing a petition to freeze all MFN tariffs.

The Philippines has committed to reduce its duties gradually over the past years to a maximum of 5 percent by 2004 but Malacañang has so far indicated it has no plan of living up this pledge.

Trade Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II had said that this administration would not be bound by free trade commitments made by its predecessors. The source said the government could back out on these commitments because these were made unilaterally to and not mandated by the World Trade Organization.

While MFN duties would be maintained, the tariff cuts under the Asean common effective preferential tariff program would proceed as scheduled in 2003 except for petrochemicals.

The government has invoked a protocol provision in the Asean-CEPT for the local petrochemical industry which allows a member-country to delay tariff cuts for industries that need an extended period of protection from competing Asean players.

Aside from waffling on the country's free trade commitments, Malacañang has shelved a second executive order which was supposed to reduce from 3 percent to one percent the tariffs on raw materials and semi-processed goods not produced in the Philippines early this year.

The first EO was issued in January which cut to one percent the duty on the first batch of raw material imports. The second batch of imported inputs should have been covered by a second EO to be issued in February until the President decided to postpone the edict indefinitely.

The products covered by the shelved EO include malt, hop cones, and vegetable saps and extracts for San Miguel Corp., various chemicals endorsed by the Samahan sa Pilipinas ng Industriyang Kimika and Philippine Phosphate Fertilizer Corp., coal briquettes for the Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp., raw materials for tires and automotive batteries, steel products, electronic goods, and textiles.

STRONG AUV, SUV DEMAND

Vehicle sales jump 10.2%

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

VEHICLE sales surged 10.2 percent through the first 10 months this year as strong demand for new pickup trucks, Asian utility vehicles (AUV), sport utility vehicles (SUV) and vans more than made up for the lackluster sales of compact and luxury sedans.

The Truck Manufacturers Association Inc. reported yesterday that total industry sales surged to 70,229 units in the first 10 months of the year from 63,704 units during the same period last year.

At this pace, the industry is on target of surpassing its 2001 tally of 76,670 units. The industry nearly wiped out all the gains it made in 2000 due to the sudden change in the Malacañang occupants, ebbing consumer confidence, and the rising competition from used vehicle imports.

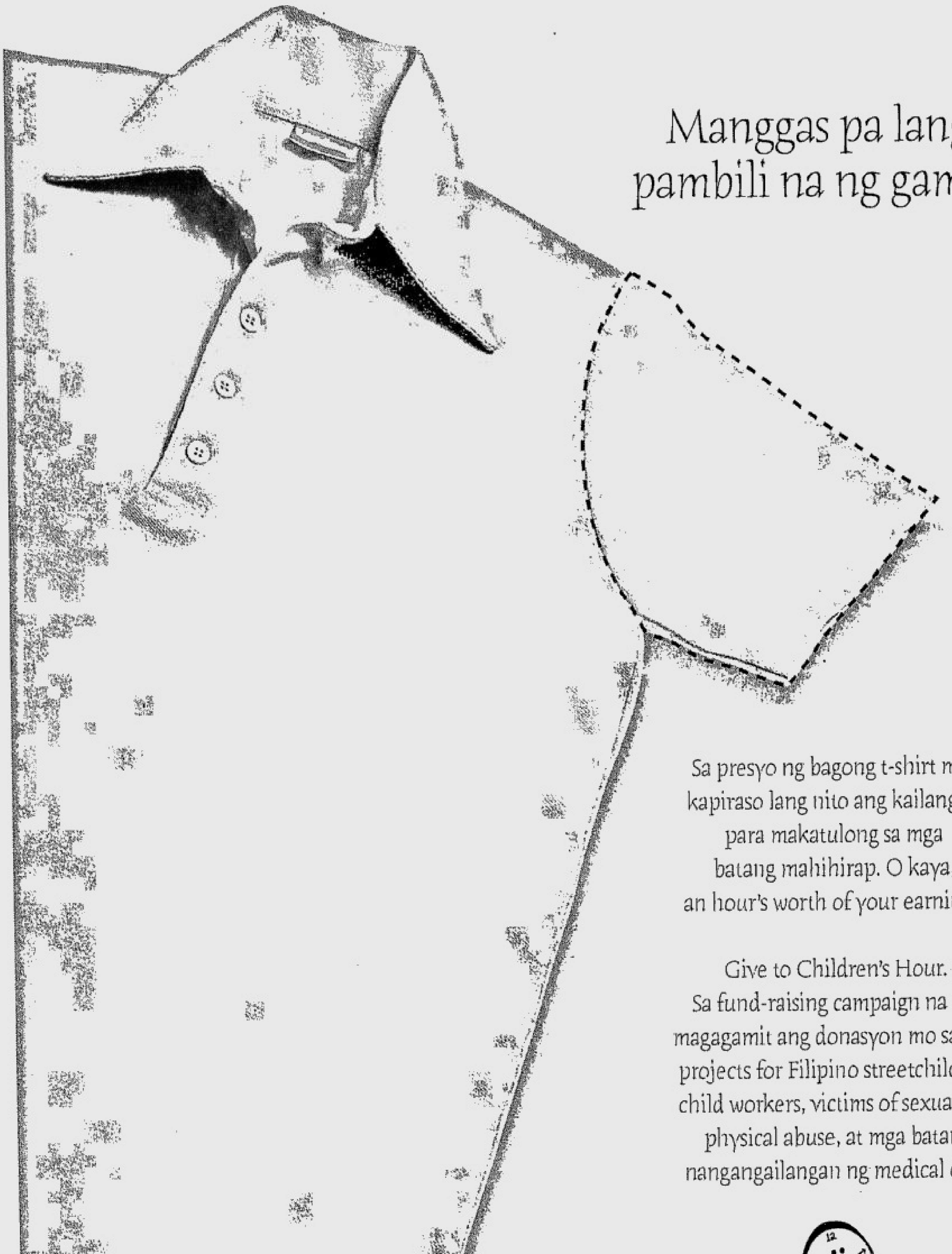
Assemblers, which have earlier projected flat to modest sales growth this year due to the uncertain economic outlook, are currently reviewing their forecasts following a rebound in demand for new vehicles in recent months.

Commercial vehicle sales climbed 18.7 percent to 51,910 units in the first 10 months this year from 43,699 units during the same period last year. In sharp contrast, passenger cars dropped 8.4 percent to 18,319 units in the first 10 months this year from 20,005 units a year ago.

TMA president Elizabeth H. Lee said aggressive promotions and new model introductions spurred stronger demand for light commercial vehicles and AUVs.

The TMA reported that total AUV sales jumped 7 percent during the first 10 months with Toyota Motor Philippines Corp.'s Tamaraw Revo as the market leader with a commanding 36.8 percent share of the market.

Other assemblers with AUV models are Mitsubishi Motor Philippines Corp., Isuzu Philippines Corp. and Honda Cars Philippines Inc. Lee said the LCV market grew 18 percent during the period with Universal Motors Corp. topping the LCV category with a 23.05-percent share of the market.



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GOINGS-ON

Managing investment risks

IN line with its program to promote professionalism and excellence in the field of finance and investment here in the Philippines, the Association of Investment Professionals-Manila (AIPM) offers finance and investment practitioners a one-day seminar entitled "Managing Investment Risks" at the Manila Peninsula on Nov. 20 from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The management of returns subject to risk is the primary responsibility of an investment manager. In the presentation, guest speaker Hon Cheung will probe into the dynamics of the fundamental trade-off between risk and returns, and provide examples of various risk-return management techniques.

Hon Cheung is the managing director of State Street Global Advisors in Singapore, where he oversees investment management activities in Southeast Asia. A member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, he served senior positions in the London and Hong Kong offices of State Street prior to his Singapore posting.

Learn the keys to building sound investments from the experts. Registration fee, inclusive of lunch, is only P200 for AIPM members, and P1,000 for non-members. Early bird rates are available until Nov. 9. Interested parties may contact Gina Oris, CFA at Tel. No. 752-5943, fax 752-5944 or email at ginaoris@ayala.com.

Champions of truth

JOSE G. Araullo, co-managing partner of Punongbayan & Araullo CPAs, called on his colleagues to be true to their calling and be champions of truth during an annual gathering of certified public accountants.

The joint conference of two major accounting organizations—the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (Picpa) and the Association of Certified Public Accountants in Public Practice (ACPAPP)—held at the Cebu Plaza Hotel in Cebu City, had invited Araullo to speak on the role of certified public accountants in a changing business environment.

In his speech, Araullo stated that CPAs have the professional responsibility "to protect the investing public and the society as a whole by ensuring that financial reports accurately and fairly represent the financial condition of the client and the result of the operations."

To ensure the integrity of internal and external audits—and of the profession itself, Araullo maintains that it is not enough to create an oversight body to police the ranks. He argues that rotation of audit partners every five years or more will not prevent fraud, "if the professional on the job is dishonest."

Portuguese festival

THE PHILIPPINES and Portugal will sign today two bilateral agreements on the promotion of investments and culture at the Heritage Hotel.

Portuguese Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Antonio Manuel Lourengco dos Santos, who is in the country for an official visit, will sign the agreements for Portugal. Secretary Dos Santos' visit, that started Nov. 6, was also timed for the culmination of the Portuguese Festival in Manila.

The agreements were described as another milestone in the bilateral relations between Portugal and the Philippines.

He is also scheduled to visit the Asian Development Bank and the University of the Philippines-Diliman during his stay here.

Yields ...

From page B5

to follow the Fed cut. We need that widening (of spreads between dollar and peso assets) because we are perceive as a risky investment because of the S&P downgrade," a dealer from another local bank said.

Credit rating firm Standard & Poors' had downgraded its rating outlook on the Philippines to negative from stable because of worries about the country's budget deficit, which already exceeded full-year targets in the first nine months of the year.

Best-bid yields for three-month bills were at 5.6 percent; six-months at 6.8 percent; one-year at 7.5 percent; two-year bonds at 8.725 percent; three-year at 9.3 percent; four-year at 10.25 percent; five-year at 10.875 percent; seven-year at 11.875 percent; 10-year at 12.3 percent; 20-year at 13.75 percent; and 25-year at 14.5 percent.

In the interbank market late on Wednesday, the average call loan rate remained steady at 7.06 percent.

Trading volume slid to P680 million from P1.180 billion previously. There were three lenders and two borrowers. *Reuters*

Ethics, sound business practice go together

By Manuel V. Pangilinan

COMMENTARY

CORPORATE governance might not be a wildly popular topic among CEOs these days. Revelations of misconduct at the highest levels of Enron, Worldcom and other companies have shaken the business world. Nor can we here claim to be more virtuous than the rest, when a survey by Transparency International ranks the Philippines as 11th most corrupt among 102 nations. So a CEO who speaks on governance courts some skepticism and, in my case, cynicism perhaps in light of the First Pacific-Gokongwei transaction.

But I'm taking the plunge anyway, even if I've been described in some circles as a "rogue executive." One journalist recently wrote that in Asia, the term "business ethics" is an oxymoron, rather like that wonderful military expression, "friendly fire." To that we must reply, as does professor Patricia Lontoc of the Asian Institute of management: "management without ethics is impoverished."

I happen to think that, precisely because corporate failures have impaired public confidence, because executive venality has victimized shareholders and employees alike, we need to recognize that ethical behavior and sound business practice are inseparable.

It is indeed ironic that my core beliefs on corporate governance represent my learnings over a long career at First Pacific. These have guided my actions every step of the way during the proposed transaction involving PLDT and Fort Bonifacio.

Principally, I've learned that an enterprise has multiple bottom lines, not just a single financial one. That a company must be responsive to all who have a stake in its future—its shareholders and creditors, employees and business partners, customers and host communities. That a company which ignores the legitimate interests of any one or more of these stakeholders—by misstating profits, befouling the environment, selling inferior goods, or breaking covenants—imperils its own existence. And we also learned that it is best to settle our differences internally rather than washing them in public—as we did unfortunately in the Gokongwei transaction.

Key elements

Our notion of corporate governance encompasses four key elements: protecting the rights of all shareholders; constituting an effective board of directors; building competent and ethical management, and providing accurate and timely disclosures.

On the first, I'll simply note that an enterprise is accountable to all its owners and not just one—even if he owns the biggest chunk of shares.

As to the second which deals with the board of directors: confidence in a company reflects the extent to which the board is active, participative, and lives up to its fiduciary responsibilities to the corporation as a whole. Once elected, directors are obliged to act for the welfare of the corporation to which he has been elected. That action must be independent and unfettered by specific interests, including those that nominated him to his seat.

Full disclosure

The qualification and quality of the members of the board, the proportion of independent directors out of the total and the degree of its independence, affect the probity and wisdom of board decisions. The independence of these three main board committees—audit, compensation and nominations—is now of paramount importance in light of the Enron experience.

As for management, the challenge is to create a corporate culture that encourages and rewards integrity as it does performance. A corporation's managers—particularly the CEO—must serve not only as stewards of its assets, but also as its moral compass.

By advocating transparency and the airing of opposing viewpoints, management creates a climate where misconduct does not go unpunished. The problem does not arise when you have a principled manager who perform well (you promote him) or an unprincipled manager who is incompetent (you fire him). You can't afford a manager who produces results by violating ethical norms. The test of leadership precisely is to create an environment where integrity emanates from the top and builds up from the ground.

Finally, full, accurate and timely disclosures are not simply a requirement of the SEC and the stock market. They are the shareholders' best safeguard against abuse. An enterprise that is accountable to its owners must exert every effort to keep them informed on a timely basis.

FirstPac-Gokongwei deal

How did corporate governance come into play in our response to the First Pacific—Gokongwei transaction involving PLDT and Fort Bonifacio?

Three key points about the proposed transaction should be explained. First, contrary to what it has been portrayed, the transaction was not a mere sale and purchase of shares between buyer and seller. A straightforward sale would have been perfectly legitimate, and I never questioned neither First Pacific's right to sell, nor Mr. Gokongwei's right to buy. But the MOA clearly contemplated, and indeed specified, a change in board and management control. And so it became an extraordinary transaction, subject to extensive disclosure regulations, shareholder approval requirements and consents from other parties. Provisions of the MOA made clear that control was to be handed over by First Pacific to the Gokongwei group even prior to closing the transaction. The special nature of the transaction therefore made the role of the PLDT board at the very outset, both appropriate and imperative.

Second, the value of the transaction indicated that a significant premium to market was being paid. This is to be expected with the transfer of control. Except that the premium will favor only one shareholder, and not the others. So the question must be: was that fair, or did the transaction require that a general offer be made to all the other shareholders? Again, this is a question that an active and responsible PLDT board, and indeed our own regulators, must raise.

Third, the transaction would subject PLDT to the control of buyers with competitive interests. The Gokongwei group includes PLDT's principal competitor, Digitel. A representative of the Gokongwei group actually stated that if the proposed transaction fell through, the funds earmarked for the purchase would be used to enhance Digitel's operations, so it could compete even more effectively against PLDT. Yet First Pacific agreed to a "due diligence" investigation of PLDT, and agreed to provide the Gokongwei group access to PLDT's "documents, contracts, agreements, files, books, and records," and to invite a nominee of the group to sit on the PLDT board pending completion of the sale. This would violate PLDT's own by-laws, which provide for the disqualification of a person from being elected as director, if that person is engaged in a competing or antagonistic business. The Supreme Court has affirmed that "where the director is so employed in the service of a rival firm, he cannot serve both, but must betray one or the other."

Fiduciary duty

Given these issues and others which I have raised directly with both First Pacific and the Gokongwei group on a number of occasions, the PLDT board had the fiduciary duty to determine whether the transaction would or would not prejudice the best interests of the company, its shareholders, its employees and its creditors, and would not violate the company's articles and by-laws.

Consequently, the PLDT board approved the following decisions with respect to the transaction:

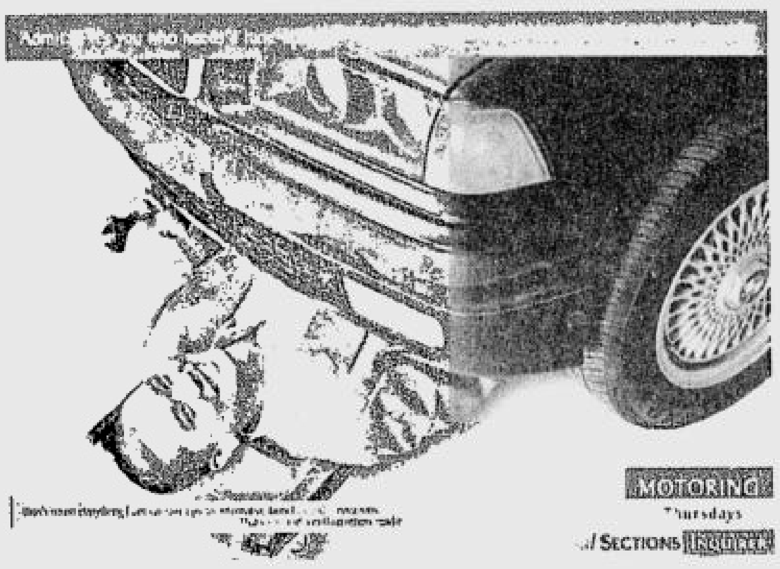
- it declared the transaction not to be in the best interests of PLDT;
- it declared the Gokongwei group as competitors;
- it disallowed any form of due diligence, and
- it invoked Article V, Section 1 of the by-laws, or the anti-competitor clause.

It's worth stressing that these decisions were not the unilateral act of one "rogue executive" out to protect his job, but reflected the unanimous approval of the board, including its independent directors and government appointees. I submit that they show a board discharging its fiduciary responsibilities, acting in accordance with the norms of good corporate governance, insisting on full and timely disclosure, and with equitable regard for the rights of all stakeholders.

9-month results

And where, you might ask, was PLDT's management in the midst of all this? Was it distracted from running the business? PLDT's recently released nine-month re-

ETHICS/B12



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BUSINESSFriday

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Marketing is finding a need, not just creating it

By Karen V. De Asis
Contributor

MANY have yet to appreciate marketing's more fundamental role as a strategic discipline in business. It is largely associated with advertising and other forms of marketing communications.

Bold or simple illustrations; hilarious, straightforward or enigmatic copy; photographic or cartoon-like visuals; beautifully crafted music, sound and visual production are but some of the creative art forms to marketing. However, there is so much more to marketing according to a study on the science of marketing which is grounded on the following time-tested truths.

Truth No. 1. Marketing is the science of discovering a latent need.

One of the misconceptions about marketing is that it can create needs. On the contrary, marketing is the science of discovering an inherent, latent physiological need.

In other words, marketing just taps needs that are actually present but not easily apparent.

In the process of responding to the latent need, the marketer creates a preference and desire for consumers to want a specific product or service.

For example, the emergence of new markets, among them, the hand sanitizer and bottled water product categories, attest to the marketers' response to a pressing latent need for products that address the consumers' ever-growing concern about environmental safety and sanitation.

Truth No. 2. Marketing is the science of discovering a key consumer insight.

The dramatic success of a brand building campaign hinges on the discovery of a relevant and meaningful key consumer insight that becomes the basis for the product's differentiating benefit and message carried across all creative forms of marketing communications.

For instance, in an effort to maintain Del Monte Spaghetti Sauce's dominance in the tomato sauce market in 1986, the brand anchored its unique selling proposition on the Filipinos' prevailing consumer belief that the best-tasting spaghetti can only come from Italy.

Thus, was born Del Monte Spaghetti Sauce's key message as the Italian spaghetti sauce substantiated with seven herbs and spices. The message was best captured in TV commercials well-remembered until today i.e. nuns, Mafia and Michaelangelo.

On the other hand, the highlight of Star Margarine's success was its successful marketing campaign of Star Rice born out of the insight from loyal users of the product who mixed the spread Star with rice because of the belief that doing so would help kids grow taller.

The insight that pre-teens want to be recognized as independent individuals was the basis for Newtex' successful introduction of the sanitary market catering to the young. Newtex' positioning talked about a sanitary pad for the emerging woman captured in the line "Newtex, para sa nagdadalaga."

It was able to successfully penetrate the market which at that time was focused on older women.

Truth No. 3. Marketing is the science of making full use of consumer market research validity tools.

Wizened marketers know how to make full use of consumer market research tracking changes in lifestyle, habits, needs, wants, preferences, etc. of their target market.

The perceptive marketer can draw relevant consumer insights from qualitative focus group researches, use findings from quantitative research in setting future directions in marketing and obtain indications for the right pricing levels from price sensitivity tests, among others.

Truth No. 4. Marketing is the science of developing and implementing a fully integrated strategic marketing plan.

Marketing is not just about the art of creating high-impact television, radio and print advertisements nor mounting special events, public relations, outdoor and transit ads and direct marketing.

Instead, it integrates a full product or service offer to the target market made possible by documenting the potential blueprint of a product or service in a strategic marketing plan.

With the strategic marketing plan comes the detailed study of the macro-environment and micro-environment; a description of the specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound marketing objective; the unique and differentiating product offer matched by value pricing; the logistics and channels of distribution; the fully integrated marketing communication plan not to mention the estimated revenue and expense associated with the plan.

Truth No. 5. Marketing requires the keen sensitivity and perceptiveness of an expert marketer.

Marketing requires a lot of investment and should not be the result of whimsical or flighty decision-making. Therefore, the reins of marketing should not be solely left to the neophyte nor the understudy.

The expert marketer must have the full mastery, competency and firmly grounded experience in the areas of marketing communications, market research, distribution and product development.

(The writer is a professor of Marketing Management and Brand Management at the De La Salle Professional Schools Graduate School of Business with email address at kdeasis@skyinet.net)

Strategic marketing: Not for big businesses only

STRATEGIC marketing is not for large companies only. It is also for small and medium enterprises who want to position their products more favorably, create a better image, enhance credibility, increase networks and pipelines, and ultimately raise revenues.

"Don't get intimidated by the term 'strategic marketing,' advises Dr. Felix M. Lao, Jr. Agora Awardee and marketing lecturer at the U.P. Institute for Small-Scale Industries. "How do you define marketing?—simply having something for people to buy, finding people who will buy, encouraging people to buy and providing value.

Strategic marketing is taking the time to carefully map out a sound marketing strategy—so that companies may push their products and services out into the marketplace as rapidly as possible and close deals successfully.

SMEs—those companies employing from 10 to 200 workers—will have an opportunity to learn how to prepare strategic marketing plans and use other strategic marketing strategies at a seminar on "Improve Your Business through Strategic Marketing" to be held on Nov. 24 at the ISSI, UP Diliman Campus.

The training program is a ventur between the UP ISSI and the University of Maryland's Institutional Reform and the Informal Sector (IRIS) Center.

For details, 926-6316; 920-6918; 928-7076 to 79 or e-mail at training.issi@up.edu.ph.

TETRA PAK

Getting known for more than just its packaging

MARKETING STRATEGY

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

INTEL with its sign "Intel inside" has cemented its place in marketing history by becoming a globally-recognized brand even if no one actually sees its products, except perhaps the computer engineers.

Tetra Pak's products are not as "invisible" as Intel's but only those people who bother to check the packaging of their favorite juice, milk or tomato sauce actually know the company and the unique packaging that it produces.

But even then, most Filipino homes already use Tetra Pak without their knowledge. It is present in the milk and juice drinks, the cooking oil, tomato sauce and all purpose cream used for salads and desserts.

As Tetra Pak celebrates its 25th year of operation in the Philippines, it has embarked on a more aggressive marketing campaign to make end-consumers know about the benefits of purchasing products that use Tetra Pak packaging technology.

Winfried Muehling, marketing director of Tetra Pak (Philippines) Inc. tells Business Friday that the company now wants to bring across the message that Tetra Pak is more than just a package but a company dedicated to making food safe.

"We are focusing on our customers and we want to make them know what is behind our company, the benefits for instance of using products that are packaged by Tetra Pak," Muehling says.

This was the reason behind the aggressive advertising campaign that focuses on the benefits of using Tetra Pak packaging materials.

Through its educational campaign, Tetra Pak hopes that a buyer would prefer a juice or cooking oil product packaged in Tetra Pak over a product packaged in other materials.

Tetra Pak's competitive advantage is its "aseptic" food processing technology that allows the manufacturing company to maintain the quality of the food without the use of preservatives. Food packaged by Tetra Pak also need not be refrigerated and have a long shelf life compared to products packaged in other forms.

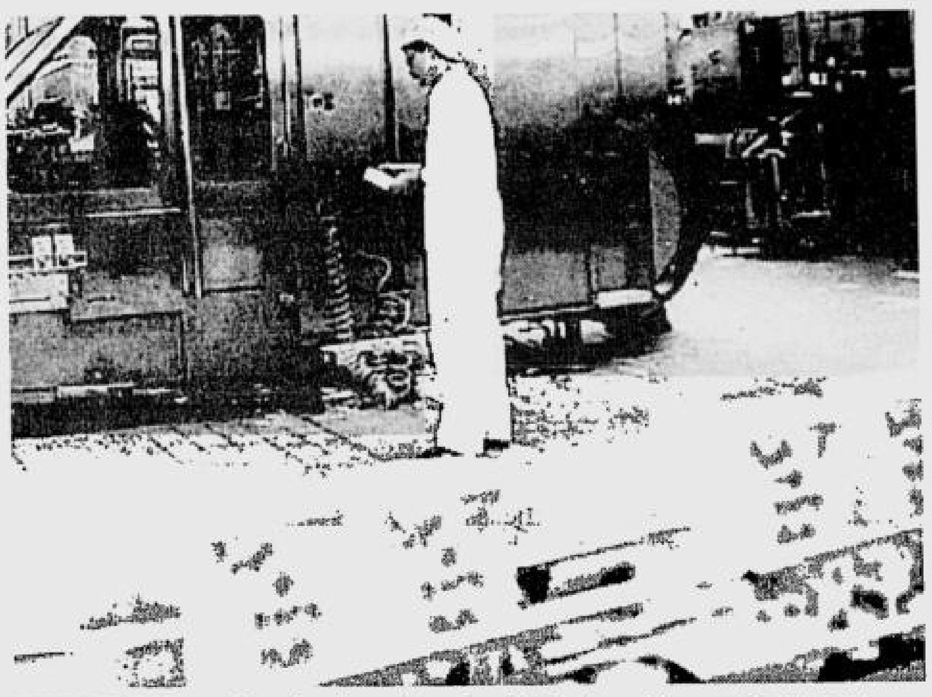
The "aseptic" food processing technology involves the heat treatment of food under controlled, sterile conditions and has been used for more than 30 years.

Milk products, for example, are first heated very quickly then cooled just as rapidly, using Ultra Heat Treatment to kill all dangerous micro-organisms. No preservatives are added during the process.

The processed milk is then transferred or packaged into Tetra Pak's aseptic package types: Tetra Brik Aseptic, Tetra Prisma Aseptic, Tetra Wedge Aseptic, Tetra Fino Aseptic or Tetra Classic Aseptic.

Each package is sealed under sterile conditions, so the food inside retains its nutritional quality and fresh taste, safe from recontamination by harmful bacteria and air.

Companies that use Tetra Pak include Nestlé, Selecta, Magnolia, Hershey's, Alaska, Hunt's, Great Taste and Minola.



TETRA PAK'S aseptic technology allows food to be stored for months without preservatives.

Muehling says Tetra Pak also helps its manufacturing partners explore other products since it is present in over 165 countries.

"We help our partners by bringing more than just technology. We introduce them to the different products that are selling well in other countries. For example, we told our local partners about the successful products abroad such as sweet milk, soya and ready-to-drink iced tea," he says.

Muehling also sees a big opportunity for local manufacturing firms to get into soya and yoghurt drinks, which are top sellers in countries such as Thailand and China.

"We can bring in the people with the know-how to produce soya. It is more affordable than chocolate milk which is very popular in the Philippines," he says.

Tetra Pak is one of the world's leading suppliers of liquid food processing and packaging systems. It operates in more than 165 markets and works in strategic partnership with its suppliers and customers to provide efficient, innovative and high quality packaging systems to customers worldwide.

BIR clarifies modes of payment of taxes

TAX-FILES

By Mildo Flor C. Sison
SGV & Co.

REVENUE shortfall and recent public outcry on tax scams prompted the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) to adopt measures that would facilitate the collection of taxes while improving control mechanisms to deter and detect diversion of tax payments. To this end, the BIR issued Revenue Regulations (RR) No. 16-2002 to clarify the modes by which taxpayers may pay their taxes to Authorized Agent Banks or AABs.

Enrollment with AAB not required

To facilitate the filing of returns and payment of taxes, the BIR lifted the requirement under RR 4-97, as amended by RR 6-98, for taxpayers to designate and enroll with the AABs where they intend to pay.

Taxpayers no longer have to enroll first before they can pay their taxes. Thus, under RR 16-2002, taxpayers may now file their tax returns or payment forms and pay their internal revenue taxes with any AAB where they can file and pay with.

Modes of payment through AABs

Taxpayers, other than those who are required to use the electronic filing and payment system (EFPS), should pay their taxes to AABs through the following modes: (a) over-the-counter cash payment; (b) bank debit system; or (c) check payment system.

An "over-the-counter cash payment" refers to payment of tax liabilities to the AAB in an amount not exceeding P10,000.

The ceiling on the amount of taxes that may be paid by way of over-the-counter cash payment is a new restriction. The restriction is a part of the over-all design to deter the diversion of tax payments.

"Bank debit system" refers to a system whereby a taxpayer, through a bank debit memo or advise, authorizes the withdrawal from his or its existing bank account the amount necessary for the payment of his tax liabilities. It is noted that RR 16-2002 no longer includes credit facility as a mode of payment. It is believed, however, that this mode of payment is still available when coupled with the bank debit system. Thus, the taxpayer may obtain credit from a bank or credit company, deposit the funds obtained into his bank account with the AAB, and thereafter authorize the AAB to withdraw from the same bank account the amount necessary to settle his tax liabilities.

"Check payment system" refers to the payment of tax liabilities with a 'bill of exchange or order instrument drawn on a bank and payable on demand.'

In the issuance and accomplishment of checks for the payment of internal revenue taxes, the taxpayer should indicate in the space provided for "PAY TO THE ORDER OF" the following data: (1) presenting / collecting bank or the bank where the payment is to be coursed; and (2) FAO (For the Account Of) Bureau of Internal Revenue as payee.

The taxpayer identification number (TIN) of the taxpayer must also be indicated under the "ACCOUNT NAME" (the name of the Taxpayer).

However, the following checks are not acceptable as payment for internal revenue taxes: (1) accommodation checks (checks issued or drawn by a party other than the taxpayer making the payment); (2) second endorsed checks (checks issued to the taxpayer as payee who indorses the same as payment for taxes); (3) stale checks (checks dated more than six months prior to presentation to the AAB); (4) post-dated checks - checks dated a day or several days after the date of presentation to the AAB); (5) unsigned checks (checks with no signature of the drawer); and (6) checks with alterations / erasures.

In accepting checks for the payment of BIR taxes and other charges, the AABs must see to it that the check covers one tax type for one return period only. Moreover, AABs must strictly comply with the systems and procedures for the reception, processing, clearing and accounting of the checks to be prescribed under a separate regulation.

Second indorsement of checks payable to the Bureau of Internal Revenue or Commissioner of Internal Revenue is absolutely prohibited.

Partial payments through tax debit memos

Taxpayers may pay, and AABs are mandated to accept tax returns or payment forms partly paid, through any of the modes of payment mentioned above and partly thru TDMs validly issued by the BIR. In this case, the taxpayer must indicate in the tax return or payment form the number of the TDM in the same manner as the check number/drawee bank and bank debit advise number are indicated in the tax return or payment form paid through check or bank debit system, respectively.

The taxpayer must also submit a photocopy of the front and back pages of the tax credit certificate (TCC) with a copy of the TDM. These photocopies must be attached to the BIR tax return or payment form.

However, these TDMs are not acceptable as payments for withholding taxes, including Fringe Benefit Tax (clarified and implemented under RR 2-93, as amended, and RR 3-98), and for taxes, fees and charges collected under special schemes or procedures or programs of the Government / BIR.

BIR-prescribed deposit slips

In filing returns and making payments thru AABs, a taxpayer must accomplish and submit a BIR-prescribed deposit slip which the AABs must design, print and make available in all participating branches. The deposit slip must, in addition to those needed by the bank, provide for the following information:

- Transaction date
- Name of Taxpayer
- TIN
- BTR-BIR Account number
- Account Name which must be BTR-BIR
- Name of Drawee Bank
- Check Number
- Bank Debit Advise Number (for debit system payments)
- Amount

The deposit slip should be accomplished and issued in triplicate copies, distributed as follows: original (taxpayer's copy), duplicate (AAB's copy) and triplicate (to be attached to the tax return).

When the taxpayer files its tax return and makes the payments, the bank teller shall machine-validate the BIR-prescribed deposit slip accomplished by the taxpayer as evidence that the BIR tax payment was deposited to the account of the Bureau of Treasury (BTr).

The AAB must also machine-validate and stamp mark the word "Received" on the return or payment form as proof of filing the return or payment form and the payment of the tax by the taxpayer. The machine validation on the tax return or payment form shall reflect the date of payment, amount paid and transaction code, the name of the bank, branch code and the teller's initials.

Extra safeguard

Taxpayers are expected to see to it that their tax returns or payment forms with payment are filed with, and the internal revenue taxes paid to, legitimate AABs. The said taxpayers may (and, perhaps, are encouraged to) confirm their tax payments with their home RDO / LTDO or with the LTDO / RDO where they are required to file tax returns or payment forms and pay internal revenue taxes.

By confirming with the appropriate BIR office whether or not the tax payments were properly remitted to the Bureau of Treasury, taxpayers not only make sure their payments were received. They also ensure that these tax payments are not diverted unlawfully. Needless to state, taxpayers must, by way of an added precaution, make sure that they securely keep a copy of all documents evidencing their tax payment.

Who would you get as your top marketing person?

CAMACHO

ABOITIZ

PANGILINAN

MORALES

TRINIDAD

MADRID

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

IN THE increasingly competitive world, the marketing professionals' positions have been elevated to near CEO alter egos. It is no longer unusual to see a marketing man appointed as CEO of a company.

Dismal economies are certainly no excuse to ignore these marketing guys, whose main tasks is really to spend money. In fact, slow growth periods should be boosted with the hiring of people who can market.

A 1927 Harvard Business Review report shows that sales increases during the recession of the 1920s in the US were experienced by companies that advertised and sales decreases were registered by firms that reduced advertising.

In the 1930s, Goldman Sachs noted that Kellogg maintained advertising during The Great American Depression while its competitor Post did not. The former became dominant in the US market for over 50 years after that.

In the later years, the same results were seen with companies like Avon and Revlon.

There are really no major studies in the Philippines that would show this trend but local marketing guys always push for continued marketing activities even in the doldrums.

We asked some local executives which marketing pro they would want in their team if budget and nationality were no object. The answers are as varied as changing consumer tastes:

Jose Isidro N. Camacho

Secretary of Finance

"Dick Gordon. Because he has high energy, passion, creativity and believes in what he is selling."

Endika Aboitiz

President and CEO of WG&A

"I would build and strengthen the firm's backdoor. I would get Sergio Zyman. He's Cuban, he built Coke. Coke was in bad shape and the CEO hired him and he marketed it."

Zyman was the former chief marketing officer of Coca Cola Co. in Atlanta in the '90s.

He changed the culture in the firm. He adopted aggressive marketing to new consumers in markets outside the United States. He adopted innovations that were unheard of and even revived almost forgotten brands like Sprite, Fanta and Diet Coke.

Sales increased from 9 billion cases a year to 15 billion cases.

Time Magazine named Zyman Top 3 pitchman of the 20th century.

He eventually left Coca-Cola and set up his own marketing firm called Zyman Marketing Group Inc.

Anthony Pangilinan

President and chief trainor of Businessworks Inc.

"My sisters Angeli (Pangilinan-Valenciano) from Genesis and Maricel (Pangilinan-Arenas) from McCann (Erickson Phils., the country's largest advertising agency). Experts *yan sa* brand development, personnel management and product development.

But I can't afford them. Neither will they submit to me!"

Louie Morales

Chair of Image Dimensions

"John Lucas. He goes beyond statistics and figures. He values the feel and pulse of the people."

Lucas is the vice president of account management of Image Dimensions.

Morales says he was the man behind the group which launched Barangay Ginebra.

"He manages the account and is well targeted—the spirit of the Ginebra man. He goes beyond figures."

Badjie G. Trinidad

General Manager, Cravings Group

"Oprah Winfrey because she seems to be the most credible person now. In the local scene—Sharon Cuneta, our local version of Oprah."

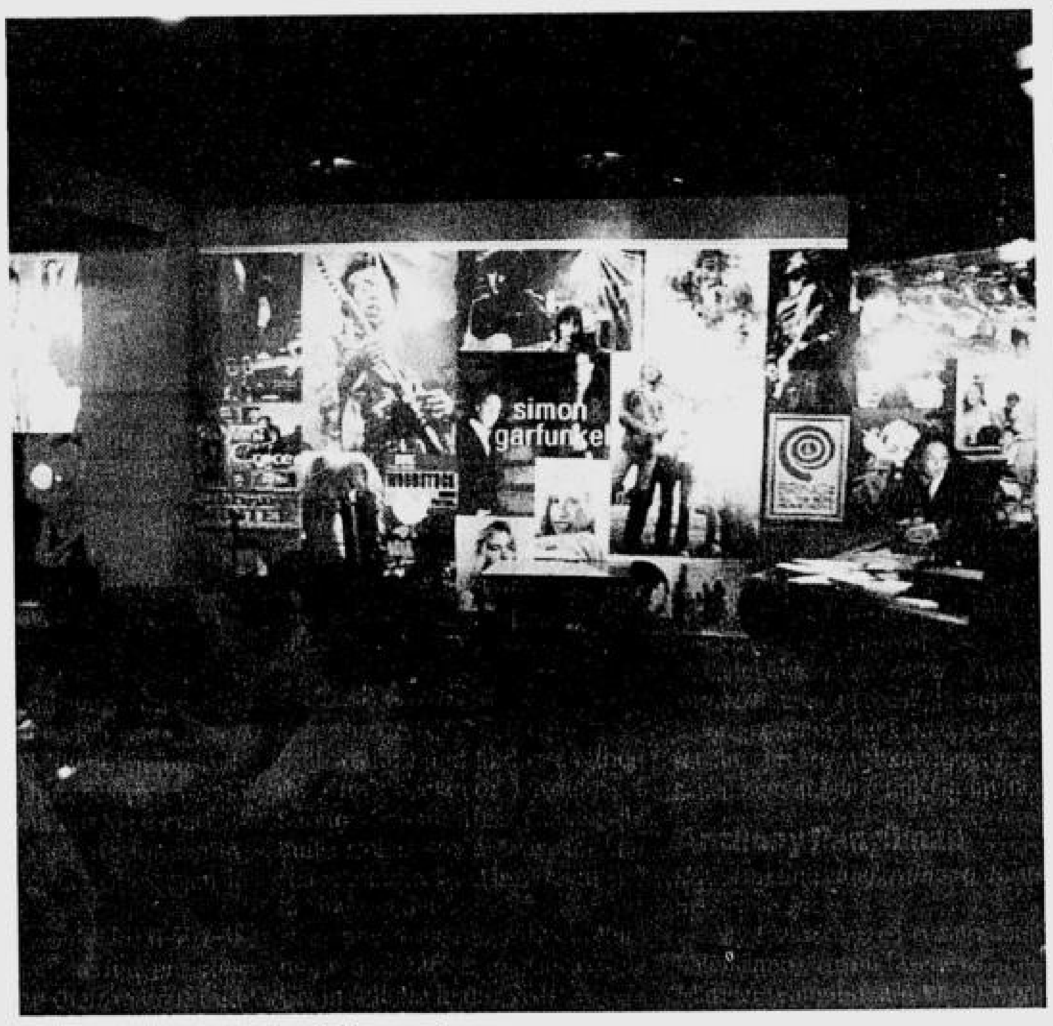
Jack Madrid

IAyala

"My pick would be Steve Jobs of Apple. Jobs is unmatched in terms of innovative product development and design, topped with marketing flair which excites, delights customers again and again. Above all, I admire his aggressiveness and relentless ambition in putting together a highly motivated and talented team."

Passion creates thriving venture for lawyer-accountant couple

By Clarissa S. Batino


THE SCENE of My Brother's Moustache

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

THE IMPORTANT stages in a man's life are defined by his desires. Or so they say.

For a certified '70s chap like SGV partner Rafael Ma. Consunji Vinzon or Boy to friends, these would have been girls during puberty, car and career in early adulthood and a bar toward mid-life.

The last passion, the 45-year-old lawyer calls the Casablanca syndrome. It is one that engulfed him in the last few years and made him feel incomplete at times despite a successful career and a happy family life blessed with three kids.

"I've been wanting to own a bar for a long time. I told myself, if it's going to happen then it's going to happen," says the SGV executive.

True enough, it did. With the encouragement and support of his wife Gigi, Boy took a leap of faith and put up the first My Brother's Moustache in Quezon City in December 2001.

Owing to the success of the first one, the couple opened the second branch last August in Makati and a third branch is set to be inaugurated late this month in Malate.

In less than a year of operations, the Vinzons have lured the likes of Asin, Coritha, Banyuhay, Joey Ayala, Wally Gonzales of the Juan dela Cruz band, and Labuyo, to perform regularly in their bars.

"I asked Boy two years ago if he still wanted to put up a bar because I told him then that it is time. And that question started it all," recounts Gigi, an accountant who also hailed from SGV and is now the vice president and comptroller of CWC Group of Companies.

Named after the famed My Father's Moustache, a folk house in Malate during the '70s, it did not take long before the loyal groupies of the flower power era trooped to the retro bar first along Madre Ignacia Street in Quezon City and more recently, to the second branch in Pasong Tamo, Makati corner Sabio Street.

"Every gentleman would like to own a bar and this one I tend to confirm myself when I come across men my age who say that they too, would like to have a bar like ours," says Boy.

On Nov. 28, the couple would be bringing the glory days of the folk house to Malate when they open the third branch of My Brother's Moustache in 615 Nakpil St.

Thriving business

Much to Gigi's delight, what had started out to be a simple passion for Boy had turned out to be a thriving business for the Vinzons couple.

Of the lawyer and accountant pair, Boy is the people person and Gigi is the finance whiz.

Since December last year when their venture was launched, the couple had been moonlighting daily from relatively high-paying day professions to what they call their "fun job" at night when they make the rounds of the two, soon-to-be-three bars, to make sure that all strands of the moustache are in place.

Thinking of their three young kids whom they bring to the bars on Saturdays, the couple says the returns from the venture are not enough for them to quit their day jobs just yet.

After the couple opened the first folk bar in Quezon City almost a year ago, they broke even after six months. For each bar, the Vinzons invested no more than one would spend on a middle-range four-wheel drive.

BOY and Gigi Vinzon

The 45-seater folk house along Madre Ignacia Street is almost, always packed on weekdays and absolutely brimming on Fridays and Saturdays, according to Gigi. The 150-seater Makati is a full house on weekends.

Self-sustaining hobby

"It is a pleasant surprise to see that the venture that we went into for a hobby became self-sustaining and could actually be moneymaking," says Gigi.

The struggling people of the '70s era have become successful professionals like the Vinzons and now have money to spare for good food and excellent entertainment.

For the true-blue hippies, the folk scene is something that had been amiss in the last 20 years and My Brother's Moustache, with its host of folk singers from the '70s, brought back the much sought for entertainment.

"We have a niche now and this is why we named it after the '70s bar, so it would have recall among the people from that era," says Boy.

And folk music, for most people, is like poetry, according to the couple.

"It always has a story to tell, it's about simple folks like us. And we never have any problems with our folk singers because they are very nice. They don't have big egos," says Boy.

As for the food, a fan of My Brother's Moustache had vouched that everything on the menu is absolutely tasty. The specialties include adobo lamb, kilawin tanigue, salmon belly.

For the good timers, the beer is P35 per bottle in any branch, be it in Quezon City where booze is normally cheaper to the more expensive Makati and Malate.

On regular days, the entertainment is free but when bigger names are on-stage, the place charges P50 to P100 for entrance.

"This has remained a passion for us, a hobby. But we didn't go into this expecting to lose money. It was a calculated risk. At the very least, we should break even but we are getting more than that," says Boy.

But more than the money, Boy says he gets so much satisfaction in seeing happy patrons, some of whom are total strangers who would even approach him to say they had a very good time.

"It makes us feel so good, so fulfilled," says the SGV executive.

For the others with a pent-up passion for a venture like Boy's, he advises to follow their gut-feel instead of having what-ifs their whole lives. "There is no right time to do these things. Do it when it feels right," he says.

This is one counsel worth taking from a seasoned lawyer from SGV.

Out handyman, in 'handyma'am'

ATLANTA—Move over, handyman. Make way for the handyma'am.

As more women in the United States tackle all manner of do-it-yourself projects around the house, the home improvement industry is beginning to shed its macho image.

Natasha Chapman became handy with fixing broken washing machines and doing other home repairs at a young age, encouraged by a father who urged her to be independent. Now, she regularly takes on home projects—while her husband watches.

"I will always be the person doing the stuff around the house," said Chapman, 32, who recently made an ottoman for her Connecticut apartment and is now designing an entertainment center. "It's just not in his make-up to do it."

In recent years, more women have found that the best way to accomplish a home project is to do it themselves, rather than rely on husbands or outside help.

A national study by home improvement retailer Lowe's Cos. found that 94 percent of female homeowners complete a home improvement project on their own at least once every five years. Another survey by its archrival Home Depot Inc. found that many women would rather spend their leisure time painting walls than shopping in a mall.

The rise of the do-it-herselfer is not lost on home-goods retail chains, which are altering store layouts, expanding product assortments and offering classes to appeal to this growing customer base. Lowe's and Home Depot say women account for up to 80 percent of the purchase decisions in the home improvement sector, and make up at least half of customer transactions.

Ann-Marie Campbell, vice president of store operations at Home Depot, said the retailer has seen the number of women seeking maintenance and repair advice increase in recent years.

The percentage of women who attend Home Depot's free how-to clinics, where participants learn how to install ceramic tile or ceiling fans, has grown to 65 percent, she said. In some cities now, the retailer offers classes just for women.

"At the time we opened our first store, the industry appealed more to men," Campbell said. "But over time, we catered to all consumers."

The projects women are doing these days are more complex than putting up window blinds or wallpaper.

"We know there are women building fences, remodeling their basements, taking on pretty serious tasks to save money," said David Olsen, a spokesman for tool maker Black & Decker Corp.

Demographic changes help explain why home improvement is becoming more of a woman's domain. Female homeownership rates are up, according to the National Association of Realtors, who says the number of home purchases by women rose 53 percent to 930,000 in 2001 from 606,000 in 1989.

In another significant change, more of these new women homeowners are unattached. "Single women have been buying homes at double the rate of single men," association spokesman Walt Molony says.

Narrowing income gaps between the sexes, delayed marriages and more flexible lending policies such as first-time buyer programs have played a part in single women's homeownership gains, he says.

Media images have helped give women the confidence to undertake major home projects. Women are more visible as hosts of cable TV home-improvement shows and in advertisements for products such as paint and plumbing fixtures.

Magazines such as Women's Day urge females to save money by becoming do-it-yourselfers.

"The reason why the home improvement market is growing so much, particularly among women, is because the home continues to be our single biggest value, and there's a wealth of information and newer, easier products to use to do the work," said Lou Manfredini, a contractor and spokesman for Ace Hardware Corp.

Manfredini says women have been buying more power tools and that manufacturers have responded by producing drills that are small enough to fit in a woman's hand.

Retailers are also catering more to handywomen. Home Depot is adding $500 million of fresh inventory to its stores, and many of those products include bathroom hardware, flooring and appliances that are much more fashion-forward.

The retailer is also rolling out a feature in its warehouse stores called Design Place, a showroom-like environment that features kitchens, bathrooms, window covering and lighting. *Reuters*

BSP sees stronger peso, lower dollar reserves

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas yesterday said the peso should strengthen in the coming weeks as dollar remittances started coming in but warned that additional government borrowings from the local market could thwart the local currency's recovery.

Yesterday, the peso bounced back to 52.87 to $1 from 52.94 to a dollar on Wednesday. As the peso value improved, however, the country's gross international reserves shed $80 million to $15.945 billion in October from $16.025 billion the previous month.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the dollar reserves were expected to go down to the $15 billion level by December as the government was scheduled to settle its obligations during the period.

Buenaventura said the peso should stabilize this month to December considering the expected flow of dollars from overseas Filipino workers, the bullish export performance and a correction in oil prices.

The government expects dollar remittances from OFWs to reach $8 billion this year, or 43 percent more than the 2001 level.

"At the very least, the peso should be stable at the 52-to-$1 level unless the government would borrow more," said the BSP chief.

The government may be forced to borrow more from the domestic market after state officials ruled out any additional foreign borrowings this year, as investors started demanding higher returns on their placements in view of Standard & Poor's downgrade of its outlook on the Philippines.

The additional domestic borrowings will depend on the budget deficit level by the end of the year.

As of September, the fiscal gap widened to P166.4 billion. The financial markets expect the deficit to balloon to P200 billion or more by year-end. The government said it could finance up to P190 billion in budget gap this year.

Buenaventura said the BSP would keep its dollar reserves target to a range of $14 to $15 billion next year. This year, the GIR target is $14.8 billion.

The BSP chief said he was not expecting a substantial improvement in the country's external payments position in 2003 even with the anticipated improvement in the country's exports next year.

From a 4-percent export growth target this year, the government is expecting exports to grow by at least 8 percent next year.

Still, Buenaventura said the central bank believed the balance-of-payments surplus would only be at $200 million from a target of $149 million this year.

"It is difficult when we have a lot of foreign debts to pay. We could not expect a higher BOP surplus or GIR as any inflow will be used to pay debts," said the BSP chief.

The BSP said the level of dollar reserves in October could cover 5.1 months of imports and 280 percent of the country's short-term debts based on original maturity.

"The minimal decline in the GIR was due primarily to the servicing of maturing obligations of the BSP and the national government, including the National Power Corp.," said the central bank.

NEW CROP PROTECTION FIRM JOHNNY VILLENA

Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor and Bayer CropScience Philippines president Joseph Reynolds exchange views on agriculture and crop protection during the launch of the newly formed Bayer CropScience. The company was formed following Bayer's acquisition of Aventis CropScience, which was another leading company in the crop protection business.

BIR's October collections seen P10B short of P40-B target

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue's tax collections in October fell P10 billion short of the P40-billion target for the month, preliminary reports showed.

Accounting for about 80 percent of the government's total revenues, the BIR's revenue collection performance in October is being watched closely by foreign rating firms and financial markets especially after Standard & Poor's downgraded its outlook on the Philippines on account of weak revenues.

The October collection performance was expected to indicate whether improvements made in previous months were sustainable. The BIR's performance will be one of the factors that will be considered by other rating agencies in determining their outlook for the country.

The BIR met its revised collection target for the first time in September but higher interest payments pushed the nine-month deficit up to P166.4 billion.

Much of the fiscal problem is being blamed on BIR's weak collection especially during the first half of the year when its collection shortfall hit more than P40 billion. As a result, its full-year target of P447.6 billion was reduced to P422.5 billion.

The Bureau of Customs is expected to deliver the next biggest yield of P99.6 billion this year against an original target of P115.1 billion.

"The preliminary numbers for October do not look good. So far, BIR is short of target by about P10 billion," said the source.

BIR Commissioner Guillermo Parayno could not be reached for comment.

Parayno said last month that its October collection should start to reflect the positive effects of the the amnesty program launched in September. The program was initiated after the BIR found about 600 companies understating their revenues and incomes.

The number of tax cheats has grown to more than 700 as of the last count and their combined understated tax payables stood at more than P25 billion.

Parayno said last month that the bureau was stepping up efforts to increase tax collections so it could regain some of the lost ground during the first half of the year.

"I can't say for certain that we will meet the remaining targets but we are sure that we are trying hard to meet them," said the BIR chief in an earlier interview.

"We are bullish on the fourth quarter collection as we expect revenues from the intensive audit of VAT taxpayers to start coming in by October," Parayno added.

NGAYON, WALA KA NANG TAKOT.
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Taon-taon dumaraan ang ilang bagyo, monsoon rains at sudden downpours. And for years, Shell Weatherkote has been the trusted waterproofing system. Pero ngayon, mas pinagaling pa ito to give you more superior protection and even better value for your money.

Introducing **Shell Flintkote**, ang complete waterproofing system na mas tumatagal, mas madaling gamitin at mas versatile. Ginawang mas elastic para kapit na kapit sa bawat application. And since it conforms to Shell's global standards, you can be sure it is of world-class quality.

Kaya kahit ilang bagyo pa ang manindak sa bahay mo, **walang kaba, walang takot sa Shell Flintkote!**

Available in 18 litres and 4 litres.

DOJ to probe suspected illegal LPG refillers

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice is set to investigate the owners and operators of two suspected illegal liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) refilling plants in line with the government's intensified campaign against the illicit trade.

Facing the DOJ probe are the owners and officers of the Malabon-based Republic Gas Corp. (Regasco) and Pasig City-based Omni Gas Corp. for alleged violation of several provisions of Republic Act No. 8293.

The probe followed a series of raids on these facilities by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI). The raids were conducted after a period of surveillance by the NBI in view of numerous complaints filed by residents of residential communities where the facilities operated, and after the alleged illegal operations by Regasco, Omni and other establishments were exposed in a television report.

The NBI also recently raided suspected illegal refilling facilities in Laoag City and Bicol. Subjects of the raid were the Northland Gas Corp. and Romars International Gases Corp. (Marsflame).

Earlier, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. vowed that the government would continue to tighten the noose on the operations of suspected illegal LPG refillers.

Perez warned that such operations posed serious risks to the safety of households and commercial establishments since illegally refilled LPG cylinders did not have the safety features of the standard authorized products. Perez said a Bureau of Fire Protection report disclosed that close to 200 fires have been triggered by explosion of these cylinders.

Perez also said the campaign was aimed at protecting consumers from the risks posed by illegal LPG cylinders

Regasco and Omni join the list of establishments already facing charges in connection with alleged illegal refilling. Earlier, the DOE announced the list that included Capitol Allied Trading, Excel Gas Corp., Lukban Gas Inc., Eslee Trading and J. Gutierrez Gas Center. Most of these facilities have been closed and levied the corresponding fines and penalties, the DOE said.

Ethics . . .

From page B9

sults speak to these questions.

Our consolidated net income for the first nine months this year increased by 74 percent, from P2.4 billion last year to P4.2 billion this year, representing eight consecutive quarters of profit growth.

Our consolidated Ebitda—a prime indicator of cash flows—rose by 40 percent to P34.2 billion during the first nine months this year.

Our cash flow remains robust—PLDT has the highest Ebitda level of any company in the Philippines.

Consolidated revenues grew by 10 percent to P58.9 billion during the period. Our level of cash operating expenses are down and our capital expenditures are also reduced, reflecting more efficient capital spending and efforts aimed at conserving cash for debt reduction and eventually, cash dividends to our shareholders. We have reduced our debts for our fixed line business by $82 million so far this year, and Smart will also start reducing its own debts by next year.

We've maintained our leadership position in the landline, cellular, Internet and satellite businesses. We now have about 10.5 million customers: 8 million cellular subscribers, 2.2 million fixed line subscribers, about 50,0000 Internet customers, and more than 400,000 cable TV subscribers.

Liability management

PLDT'S liability management program has been completed, and we have successfully addressed the company's short term debt issue ahead of its time. Since then, our short-term commercial papers have been assigned the highest ratings by the Philippine Ratings Services Corp., the local affiliate of Standard & Poor's.

So there you have it. Throughout the incubation of the transaction, management was not distracted from its priorities and its focus. And we kept our communication lines open to our shareholders, creditors and employees. Through it all, our people demonstrated professionalism and integrity by turning in excellent operating results.

Conclusion

The episode may or may not now be behind us. What continues, and remains foremost in the minds of everyone at PLDT is the commitment to be the nation's premier telecommunications company: the company that enables people to get in touch, to be informed, to understand and to make intelligent choices.

(The author is president of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and chair of Metro Pacific Corp. Mr. Pangilinan delivered this speech yesterday in a meeting of the Rotary Club of Manila)

ECONOMISTS' OPINION

Fed cut may not be enough to start recovery

WASHINGTON—After the Federal Reserve tried boosting the wheezing economy with an interest rate cut for the first time this year, private economists offered mixed opinions on whether more may be needed.

Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan and his colleagues on Wednesday prescribed a half-percentage point reduction to the federal funds rate, the Fed's main lever for influencing the economy. That pushed the funds rate, the interest that banks charge each other on overnight loans, to a 41-year low of 1.25 percent.

In response, some commercial banks lowered their prime lending rate—a benchmark for many consumer loans—by a similar half-point to 4.25 percent, the lowest rate since 1959.

By lowering short-term interest rates, Fed policymakers hope to motivate anxious consumers to spend more and wary businesses to invest more, energizing economic growth.

"I think the Fed recognized that the consumer is getting near the end of their ropes," said economist David Jones, author of "Unlocking the Secrets of the Fed."

The Fed said Wednesday's rate reduction "should prove helpful as the economy works its way through this current soft spot."

With interest rates already at low levels all year long, some private economists wondered whether Americans would rush out on a major buying binge. But many believed the rate reduction would provide consumers and businesses with a much-needed psychological boost, reducing the odds that they would sharply cut spending and investment and throw the economy into a tailspin.

"Consumers are hanging in there, but with increasingly less conviction," said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Economy.com. "They are continuing to buy if given what they consider to be once-in-a-lifetime deals, but otherwise they are very cautious and thinking about pulling back further."

Zandi and other economists believed the bold, half-point rate reduction probably meant the Fed would stay on the sidelines for the next few months. But other economists said they thought a further reduction could come at a policymakers' meeting either in December or January.

"If things improve and a possible war with Iraq recedes, then they may not have to cut rates again. But my guess is that we will get another quarter-point move in January," said David Wyss, chief economist at Standard & Poor's.

Economists, however, didn't believe the Fed wanted to create an expectation that rates would be moving even lower. The Fed on Wednesday returned to a neutral policy stance—indicating that economic risks were equally balanced between inflation and weak growth.

"At this point, the Fed would want to wait to see what impact this aggressive action will have," said Lynn Reaser, chief economist at Banc of America Capital Management. Before Wednesday's action, the federal funds rate hadn't changed since Dec. 11.

Many economists said that with Republicans now in control of both houses of Congress, the Bush administration is likely to move forward with extra government stimulus measures to jump-start growth.

Some economists worry that the economic recovery—which has been advancing in fits and starts all year—may be in danger of stalling.

Many forecasters say economic growth in the current October-December quarter could slow to just a one-percent pace, down from a 3.1-percent growth rate in the third quarter.

The jobless rate climbed to 5.7 percent in October and manufacturing—the weakest link in the economic recovery—contracted in October for the second straight month. *AP*

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8953.29
+15.73

TOKYO'S stock prices graph is displayed at a security company's branch in central Tokyo. Japanese share prices closed slightly higher Wednesday, with the Nikkei-225 average ending at 8,953.29, but failed to hold onto the symbolic 9,000-point mark despite gains in the hi-tech sector following another rise on Wall Street. AFP

Asian banks unlikely to follow US Fed cut

SINGAPORE—Domestic factors should prevent Asia's central banks from falling in line to slash interest rates after the Federal Reserve cut US rates by hefty half a percentage point, analysts said Thursday.

The US rate cut would however give the region's central banks more room to ease rates in the longer term if the global economic downturn worsens, they said.

Bank of America economist Simon Flint said Hong Kong, Thailand, Taiwan and Malaysia were the most likely to slash rates, while Indonesia and the Philippines may need to weigh the potential impact of such a cut on their currencies.

The Monetary Authority of Singapore had a "60-40" chance of loosening monetary policy in January, Flint told AFX-Asia, the financial news subsidiary of AFP.

Federal Reserve policymakers voted unanimously Wednesday to cut key interest rates by half a percentage point to 1.25 percent to boost a flagging US economy.

It was the Federal Open Market Committee's first cut this year to the federal funds target rate, which lies at a 41-year low, and was twice as deep as expected by most market economists.

The downturn affecting Asian economies should temper the region's central banks from rushing to trim rates, analysts said.

The Fed's move "is unlikely to generate a cut in policy interest rates, on average, across Asia ex-Japan in the short term," Singapore's DBS Bank said.

"The rate cut does give central banks in the region flexibility . . . in the event of a worse than anticipated slowdown in the global economy since inflationary pressures remain benign on average across Asia ex-Japan," Southeast Asia's biggest lender said.

Central banks would seek guidance from domestic factors, with Hong Kong seen likely to follow with a 50-basis point cut in the rediscount rate because of its currency board arrangement, it said.

"In China and Malaysia, fixed exchange rate systems with capital controls implies that interest rate arbitrage opportunities are limited hence decoupling of policy rates from FFR (Federal Funds Rates) movements," DBS said.

Countries where domestic considerations in terms of price stability, unemployment and maintaining export competitiveness are key concerns policy rates are unlikely to follow with a rate cut, it added. *AFP*

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7 SWEETHOME ALABAMA
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9 KAILANGAN KITA
10 KAILANGAN KITA

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1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
6 RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX RESERVE

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(Pasay) tel 833.3290 · 833.3274

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 TWO TIMER
3 DALAGINDING

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www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 GHOSTSHIP
3 TWO TIMER
4 TRANSPORTER
5 DALAGINDING

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www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

1 GHOSTSHIP
2 DALAGINDING
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 TWO TIMER
5 TRAPPED
6 TRANSPORTER

M st r
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004

1 SOON TO OPEN
2 SOON TO OPEN

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to 13

"TRANSPORTER"
NOV. 6,7,8,2002 TIME: 6:00 PM TO 7:30 PM.
TIME: 8:10 PM TO 9:40 PM.
TIME: 10:20 PM TO 11:50 PM
NOV. 9, 2002 TIME: 3:50 PM. TO 5:20 PM.
TIME: 6:00 PM TO 7:30 PM.
TIME: 8:10 PM TO 9:40 PM.

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

1 BAKIT NGAYON KA LANG
2 SINGSING NI LOLA

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 DALAGINDING
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8580

1 KAILANGAN KITA
4 TWO TIMER
5 CHANGING LANES
6 DALAGINDING
7 GHOSTSHIP
8 TRAPPED
9 TRANSPORTER

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508

2 RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928

1 TWO TIMER
2 KAILANGAN KITA
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 TRAPPED
5 TRANSPORTER
6 KAILANGAN KITA
7 GHOSTSHIP
8 ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
9 DALAGINDING

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082

1 GHOSTSHIP
2 KAILANGAN KITA
3 TWO TIMER
4 TRANSPORTER
5 TRAPPED

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656 6795

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 TRANSPORTER
3 TRAPPED
4 TWO TIMER
5 GHOSTSHIP

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

1 TWO TIMER

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888

1 KAILANGAN KITA

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

Dilson TWO TIMER
Lords DALAGINDING
Jennet KAILANGAN KITA

MARIKINA Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 533.3856

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 TWO TIMER
3 TRANSPORTER

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

1 TRANSPORTER
2 TWO TIMER
3 RESERVER
4 KAILANGAN KITA
5 DALAGINDING

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 TWO TIMER
2 KAILANGAN KITA

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT
Araneta

[illegible] CINEPLEX
tel 911.3101 loc. 821 8242 8400

1 KAILANGAN KITA-1:35/3:45/5:55/8:05
2 TWO TIMER=12:10/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50
3 GHOSTSHIP=12:05/2:15/4:25/6 [illegible] 8:40
4 TRAPPED12:05/2:15/6:35/8:40
5 TRANSPORTER=2:00/4:10/6:20/8:30
6 SWEET HOME ALABAMA=12:20/2:20/4:20/6:20/8:20
7 CHANGING LANES=12:05/2:15/4:25/6:35/8:45

Farmers Plaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821 8242 8400

1 DALAGINDING=1:40/3:40/5:40/7:40
2 TWO TIMER=1:15/3:25/5:35/7:45

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 : 534.2198

1 TWO TIMER
2 KAILANGAN KITA
3 TRANSPORTER

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 TWO TIMER
2 KAILANGAN KITA
3 TRANSPORTER
4 GHOSTSHIP

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 GHOSTSHIP
3 TRANSPORTER
4 TWO TIMER

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 TWO TIMER
2 SINGSING NI LOLA
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 TWO TIMER
3 HALLOWEEN
4 RED DRAGON

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305

1 RED DRAGON
2 TWO TIMER
3 KAILANGAN KITA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
3 DALAGINDING
4 GHOST SHIP

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 TRANSPORTER
2 KAILANGAN KITA
3 TWO TIMER
4 GHOSTSHIP
5 BED TIME STORY

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 TWO TIMER
2 KAILANGAN KITA
3 TRANSPORTER

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

1 TWO TIMER
2 KAILANGAN KITA
3 TRANSPORTER

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

1 SINGSING NI LOLA
2 TWO TIMER
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 RED DRAGON

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 BED TIME STORY
2 KAILANGAN KITA
3 SINGSING NI LOLA

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 SINGSING NI LOLA
2 ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
3
4

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 SWEET HOME ALABAMA
2 SINGSING NI LOLA
3 GHOSTSHIP
4 BALLISTIC ECK VS' SEVER

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1 CHANGING LANES
2 TWO TIMER
3 GHOST SHIP
4 STA. CLAUSE 2
5 TRANSPORTER
6 KAILANGAN KITA
7 DALAGINDING
8 TRAPPED

SM CENTERPOINT
7140522 -7161416

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 DALAGINDING
3 TRANSPORTER
4 TWO TIMER
5 KAILANGAN KITA
6 STA. CLAUSE 2
7 CHANGING LANES
8 TRAPPED
9 GHOST SHIP
10 SWEET HOME ALABAMA

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749

1 SWEET HOME ALABAMA
BALLISTIC: ECKS VS. SEVER
3 SINGSING NI LOLA
4 TRANSPORTER
5 CHANGING LANES
6 KAILANGAN KITA
7 GHOST SHIP
8 TRAPPED
9 KAILANGAN KITA
10 TWO TIMER
BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
12 DALAGINDING

SM CITY MANILA
5239240

1 CHANGING LANES
2 TRAPPED
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 SWEET HOME ALABAMA
BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
6 TRANSPORTER
7 DALAGINDING
8 STA. CLAUSE 2
9 KAILANGAN KITA
10 KAILANGAN KITA
11 GHOST SHIP
12 TWO TIMER

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 63294[illegible]

1 RED DRAGON
2 CHANGING LANES
3 TRANSPORTER
4 SWEET HOME ALABAMA
5 TRAPPED
BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
7 TWO TIMER
8 DALAGINDING
9 KAILANGAN KITA
10 GHOST SHIP
11 SINGSING NI LOLA
12 STA. CLAUSE 2

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9205457

1 KAILANGAN KITA
2 GHOST SHIP
3 TWO TIMER
4 KAILANGAN KITA
5 SWEET HOME ALABAMA
6 TRAPPED
7 TRANSPORTER
8 CHANGING LANES

SM SOUTHMALL
8066800

1 SWEET HOME ALABAMA
2 TRAPPED
3 TRANSPORTER
4 TWO TIMER
5 STA. CLAUSE 2
6 DALAGINDING
7 KAILANGAN KITA
8 GHOST SHIP
9 TWO TIMER
10 SINGSING NI LOLA

SM CITY CEBU
2313876

BALLISTIC: ECKS VS. SEVER
2 CHANGING LANES
3 STA. CLAUSE 2
4 BIRTHDAY GIRL
5 KAILANGAN KITA
6 TWO TIMER
7 GHOST SHIP
8 KAILANGAN KITA

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422

1 BEDTIME STORIES
2 CLOSED
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 KAILANGAN KITA
5 RED DRAGON
6 PLUTO NASH
7 CLOSED
8 TWO TIMER

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

1 GHOST SHIP
2 PLUTO NASH
3 STA. CLAUSE 2
4 KAILANGAN KITA
5 TWO TIMER
6 KAILANGAN KITA

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975

1 TWO TIMER
2 TRANSPORTER
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 CHANGING LANES

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

1 TRANSPORTER
2 SINGSING NI LOLA
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 TWO TIMER

SM CITY DAVAO
2976999

BALLISTIC: ECKS VS. SEVER
2 TWO TIMER
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 MR. DEEDS
KAILANGAN KITA
6 POSSESSION

SM BICUTAN

1
2
3
4
WATCH OUT FOR THE OPENING ON NOVEMBER 29, 2002

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO

1
2
3
4
WATCH OUT FOR THE OPENING ON NOVEMBER 15, 2002

[illegible] THE PODIUM

633-6676

TRAPPED
11:40 FS/12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/
10:35 LFS/11:00 LMF/12:45 END

CHANGING LANES
11:40 FS 12:10 MF/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50/
10:30 LFS/11:00-LMF/12:40 END

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1 THX RED DRAGON
11:20(MF),2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00(LMF),12:08(END)
2 TRAPPED
3 THE TRANSPORTER
4 SWET HOME ALABAMA
5 KAILANGAN KITA
6 CHANGING LANES
7 SANTA CLAUSE 2
8 TWO TIMER
9 GHOST SHIP
10 DALAGINDING

MATINEE PRICE:P80 THX cinemas / P65 travel cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita 536 -7809- 12

OPENS ON NOV. 13 - HARRY POTTER
2 SWEET HOME ALABAMA
3 TRAPPED
4 THE TRANSPORTER
5 GHOST SHIP
6 KAILANGAN KITA
7 CHANGING LANES

Metro East - Marcos hway 682- 8193 / 8780

1 THE SANTA CLAUSE 2
2 CHANGING LANES
3 GHOST SHIP
4 TWO TIMER
5 TRAPPED
6 KAILANGAN KITA
7 TRANSPORTER
8 DALAGINDING

Novaliches 935- 3229 - 30

1 THE TRANSPORTER
2 GHOST SHIP
3 SWEET HOME ALABAMA
4 DALAGINDING
5 CHANGING LANES
6 KAILANGAN KITA
7 TWO TIMER
8 TRAPPED

Imus 471- 8188 / 875- 3838

1 THE TRANSPORTER
2 GHOST SHIP
3 TWO TIMER
4 TRAPPED
5 KAILANGAN KITA
6 SANTA CLAUSE 2

Bacolod 441- 0453 / 0459

1 MR. DEEDS
2 KAILANGAN KITA
3 RED DRAGON
4 BIRTHDAY GIRL
5 "O"
6 SINGSING NI LOLA

Iloilo 336- 8077 - 78

1 RED DRAGON
2 MR. DEEDS
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 BEDTIME STORIES
5 TWO TIMER
6 PLUTO NASH

Star Mills- Sn Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1947
961- 5318 / 5270

1 PLUTO NASH
2 CHANGING LANES
3 KAILANGAN KITA
4 TWO TIMER
5 BEDTIME STORIES
6 GHOST SHIP

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Bacolod :	BAC

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Chad sings at Merk's

NOVEMBER at Merk's in Greenbelt 3 promises to be a month to remember.

Tomorrow, Nov. 9, balladeer Chad Borja performs live to celebrate his birthday. Sharing the stage with him is his own group, the K-10 Band.

The versatile Chad started his career in Cebu, where he played with a band in a plush hotel in the heart of that southern capital.

He became popular in Manila as a solo performer and a recording artist, a feat temporarily halted by a bout with cancer.

However, after a successful operation and therapy, Chad is more than ready to take off again in the local scene and recapture a good following.

His latest album, "Show Me the Way," was produced and recorded in Los Angeles, California and released under Warner Music Philippines.

The songs were arranged by world-renowned jazz instrumentalist Yutaka Yokokura. Guesting in the album are jazz singer Kevin Lettau and pop diva Kuh Ledesma.

Last January, Chad formed the K-10 Band, who sings pop-fusion music.

Merk's Bar Bistro is an outlet blending good taste in food and entertainment at Greenbelt 3 in Ayala Center.

Call 757-4721 for tickets or reservations.

BIRTHDAY BOY. Chad Borja performs with his K-10 Band.

Weekend bar tour

MILD Seven continues to pump weekends with the best of entertainment and gimmicks.

This week, the Mild Seven team treated all partyphiles to twice the fun and action by giving away free invitations to the "XLR8--The Mild Seven F1 Experience" event when they stopped by some of the best bars in Quezon City, Pasig and Makati last Nov. 6 and 7.

Today Nov. 8, is the last chance to grab free invitations when you join the gorgeous models that make up the Mild Seven team as they visit Bargo, Blue Onion, Chicago Road House and Cable Car in Quezon City; and Che, Mati, Cork, Grilla, Gerry's Grill, National Sports Grill and Au Bar Greenbelt in Makati.

"XLR8 — The Mild Seven F1 Experience" caps the week with Mild Seven-Renault's top car racer Jenson Button leading the celebration at The Fort Bonifacio, Global City Taguig tomorrow, 1 p.m. Karting, Arcade.

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

SANTA CLAUSE 2 GP 12:50,3:00.5:10, 7:20,9:30	CHANGING LANES P13 11:40,1:50.4:00, 6:10,8:20,10:30	KAILANGAN KITA P13 12:40,2:55,5:10, 7:25,9:40
TRAPPED R18 12:50,3:05,5:20, 7:35,9:50	TRANSPORTER P13 12:40.3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	SWEET HOME ALABAMA P13 11:00,1:10,3:25, 5:40,8:00,10:20

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM - MON. TO FRI.

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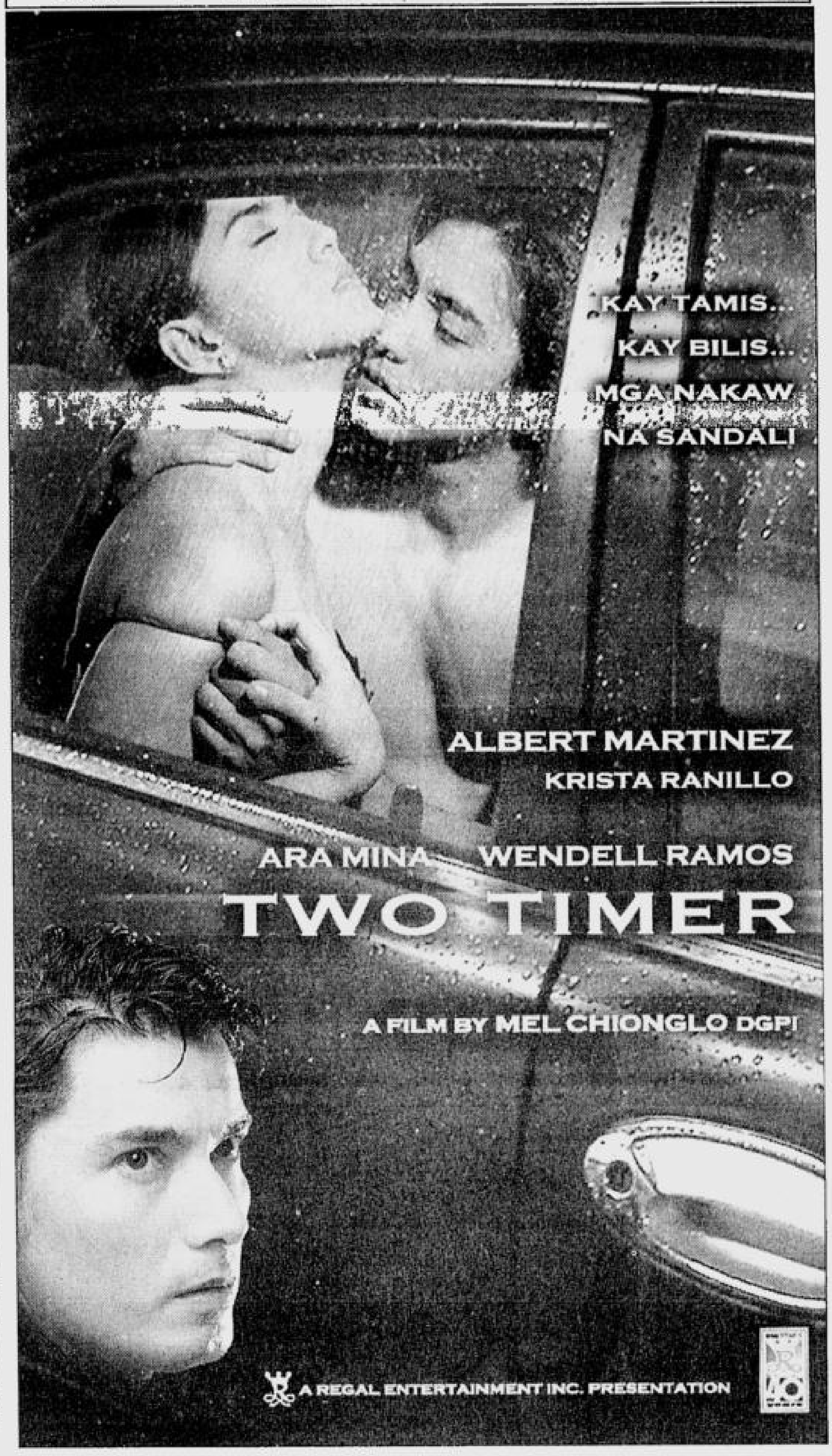


For sreening times, call 729-7777
Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

ALL DIGITAL SOUND CINEMAS

G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB1 GREENBELT 1	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
TWO TIMER	SWEET HOME ALABAMA THE TRANSPORTER	THE MAN WHO WASN'T THERE (EXCLUSIVE) 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30	TRANSPORTER 12:00, 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00, 11:15	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
THE TRANSPORTER	CHANGING LANES 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50, 12:00	PIÑERO (Exclusive) 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30	SWEET HOME ALABAMA 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30	CHANGING LANES
KAILANGAN KITA	GHOST SHIP RED DRAGON	REGINE VELASQUEZ-SONGBIRD SONGS NOV. 8-9, 21-22-23, 29-30 / DEC. 6-7, 13-14, 20-21, 27-28	KAILANGAN KITA 12:05, 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9:05, 11:20 TRAPPED 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00	KAILANGAN KITA TRAPPED
KAILANGAN KITA	KAILANGAN KITA TRAPPED		CHANGING LANES 12:10, 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00	THE TRANSPORTER

Reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS G4 (or any Ayala Cinemas) and send to 2333
Or log on to www.sureseats.com
GSC: Guaranteed Seats Cinema

The Ayala Mall Events

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

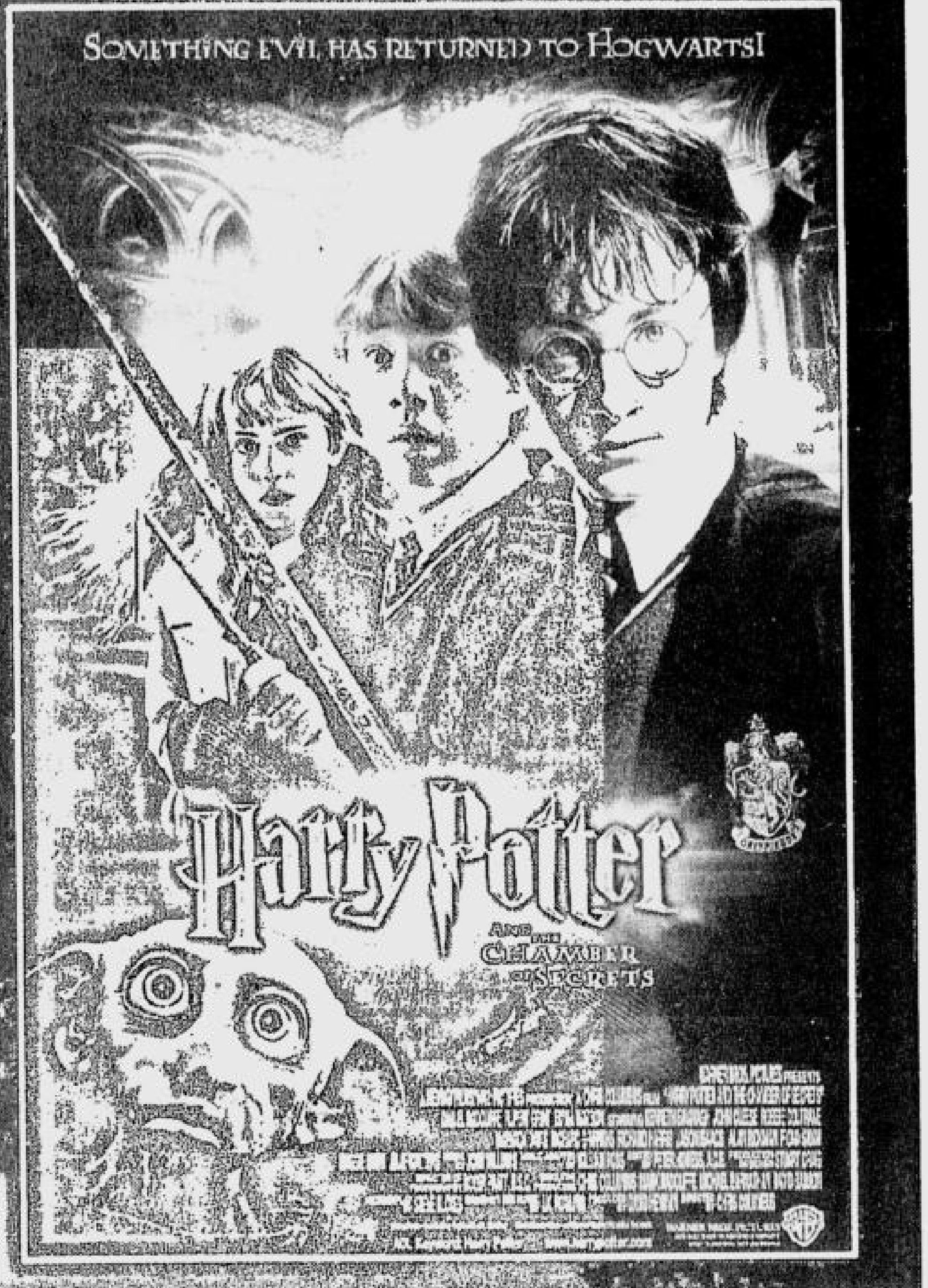
MAKATI ALABANG CEBU

this halloween be charmed at the Ayala Malls

Makati
October [illegible] Glorietta
[illegible] Show, 2 pm
[illegible] Trick or Treat for Kids [illegible] pm
October [illegible] 0 pm, Greenbelt Park
Green Lounge Halloween Ball
Alabang
October 30, [illegible] pm
Mallwide Trick or Treat for Kids
October 31, 6 pm, Town Plaza
Halloween Party featuring Southborder
Cebu
October [illegible] Activity Center
Trick or Treat for Kids
October 30, 6 pm
[illegible] Entertainment Center, Halloween Parties

Ayala Malls. Because you deserve more.

AYALA CINEMAS


SOMETHING EVIL HAS RETURNED TO HOGWARTS!
Harry Potter AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS

HURRY! BUY YOUR TICKETS IN ADVANCE NOW
at the Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 3 & Alabang Town Center Ticketbooth.

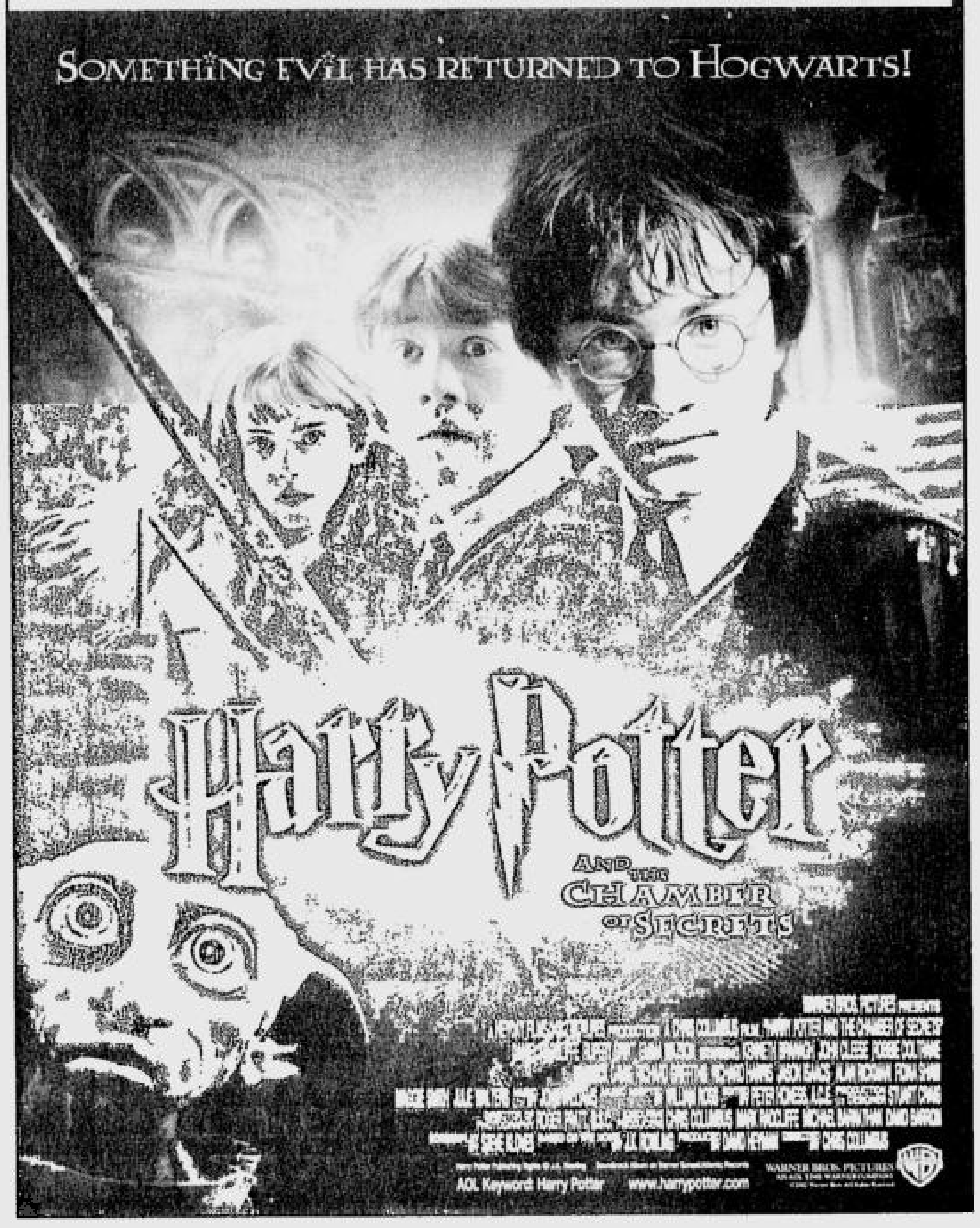
OPENS AT ALL AYALA CINEMAS STARTING NOV. 13

For screening times, call 729-7777

MTRCB Rating: General Patronage (G)

OPENS NOVEMBER 13 IN MORE THAN 150 THEATERS NATIONWIDE!

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage ALL AGES ADMITTED


SOMETHING EVIL HAS RETURNED TO HOGWARTS!
Harry Potter AND THE CHAMBER OF SECRETS
AOL Keyword: Harry Potter
www.harrypotter.com
WARNER BROS. PICTURES

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING Art Film GREENBELT 1

PIÑERO

"Piñero" tells the story of the explosive life of a Latino icon, the poet-playwright-actor Miguel Piñero, whose urban poetry is recognized as a pre-cursor to rap and hip-hop. After doing time in hard-core Sing-Sing for petty thefts and drug dealing, Piñero's prison experiences developed into the 1974 Tony-nominated play Short Eyes. The resulting notoriety and fame was too much for the Latino bad-boy genius who retreated to the darker corners of New York City.
Starring: Benjamin Bratt, Talisa Soto, Mandy Patinkin, Rosita Moreno, Jaime Sanchez. Directed by Leon Ichaso

"Vibrant and compelling."
- Kevin Thomas, LOS ANGELES TIMES

MTRCB RATING: Restricted 18 (R)

NOKIA SKYFILMS

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Library talents perform in new QC sing-along bar

THE POWER of feng-shui works wonders for the business ventures of Jocelyn Asotigue Cantos and her husband Jess.

They started out in a business that brings talents in Japan with their Cristar International Prom Agency Inc. As the business boomed, they decided to venture into another diversion.

Capitalizing on a winning horse in the racetrack, the couple put up Ahoy There, a new restaurant and grill in Timog Avenue, Quezon City, just a stone's throw away from GMA 7.

Ahoy There has been the favorite place of horse owners who regularly meet on the second floor to unwind and get a little fun and laughter.

Ahoy There is also a sing-along bar.

The Library's pride, The Raging Divas, sought after impersonators, will perform tonight.

Powerdance gig sponsors

DOUGLAS Nierras and his Powerdance will have a dance concert on Saturday at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The show is called "Can Everybody Powerdance?"

The concert is supported by PLDT Power Convergence, Centrum Multi-Vitamins, MC Home Depot, Lactacyd Feminine Wash, Shangri-la Plaza Mall, Novellino Wines, Ratsky, Pinoymail, Tower Records, Today Newspaper, Joey 92.3, RJ 100, 105.1 Crossover and NU 107.

For ticket inquiries, call Powerdance studio at 6336417.

MTRCB RATING ▶ R-18 "THE GREAT HUNT" 2ND WEEK!
Exclusively at SM MEGAMALL, SM MANILA, SM FAIRVIEW
SAMUEL LE BIHAN MARK DACASCOS
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In 1766, the peasants of Gevaudan in France lived in fear. A devilish beast claimed hundreds of victims-killed them under the most horrifying circumstances. Now, are you ready to face the "MONSTER FROM HELL?"
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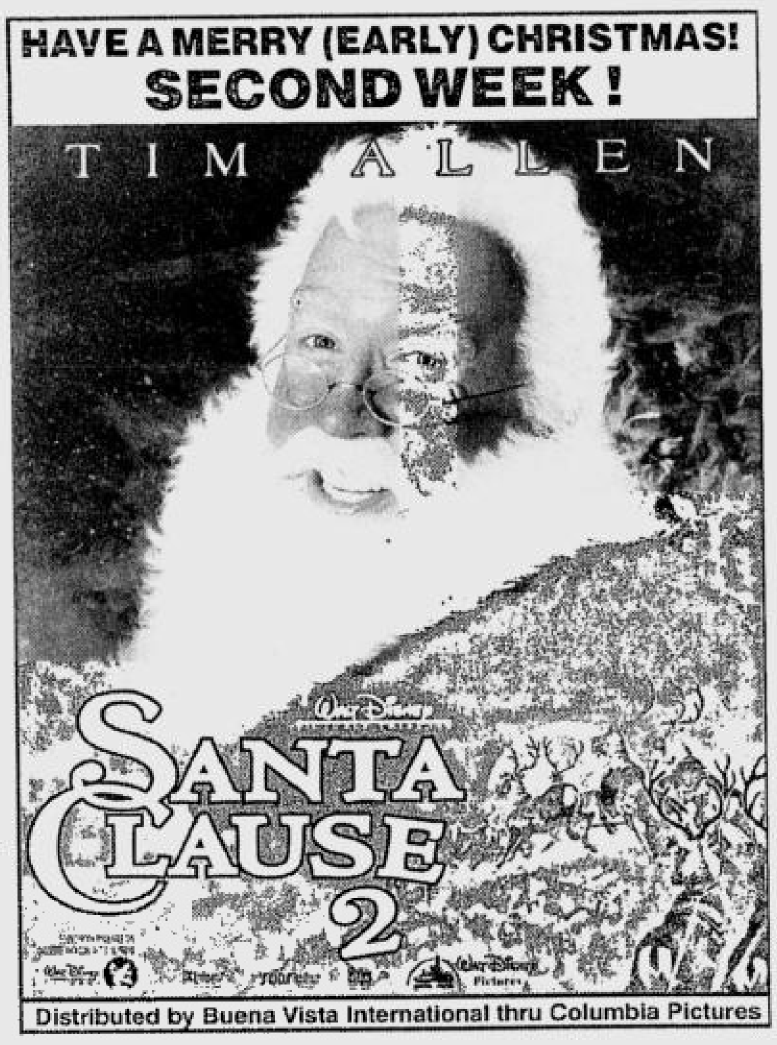
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MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	GAMITAN / VODOOO
ODEON	TRANSPORTER
ODEON-2	BUKAS BABAHA ANG DUGO / SENSUAL
ROBEN	DALAGINDING
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	AUSTIN POWER / DERAILED

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET-2	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
QUEZON-1	DALAGINDING
REMAR	DALAGINDING
REMAR-2	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN

NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA

A	KAILANGAN KITA
B	TWO TIMER
C	

MANDALUYONG CITY

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
CINEMA-2	SANTA CLAUSE 2

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	ALYAS BOMBA QUEEN
CINEMA-2	BEDTIME STORIES
CINEMA-3	HUWAG MONG TAKASAN
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SINGSING NI LOLA
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	MUNTING TINIG
CINEMA-6	BALLISTIC
CINEMA-7	BAKIT NGAYON KA LANG
CINEMA-8	RED DRAGON
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	GHOST SHIP
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	SWEET HOME ALABAMA
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	HALLOWEEN RESSURECTION
CINEMA-12	SANTA CLAUSE 2
CINEMA-14	SINGSING NI LOLA
CINEMA-15	9 MORNINGS

LORES

CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

CINEMA 1	MR. DEEDS
CINEMA 2	9 MORNINGS
CINEMA 3	BESTMAN
CINEMA 4	K-19

UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1	KAILANGAN KITA=1 35/3 45/5 55/8 05
Ali 2	TWO TIMER=12:10/2:20/4:30/6:40/8:50
Ali 3	GHOST SHIP=12:05/2:15/4:25/6:35/8:40
Ali 4	TRAPPED=12:05/2:15/4:25/6:35/8:40
Ali 5	TRANSPORTER=2:00/4:10/6:20/8:30
Ali 6	SWEET HOME ALABAMA=12:20/2:20/4:20/6:20/8:20
Ali 7	CHANGING LANES= 12:05/2:15/4:25/6:35/8:40

FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS

Farmers 1	DALAGINDING=1:40/3:40/5:40/7:40
Farmers 2	TWO TIMER=1:15/3:25/5:35/7:45

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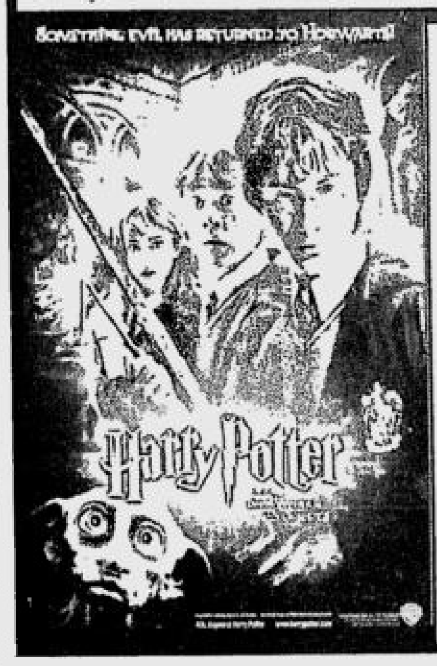
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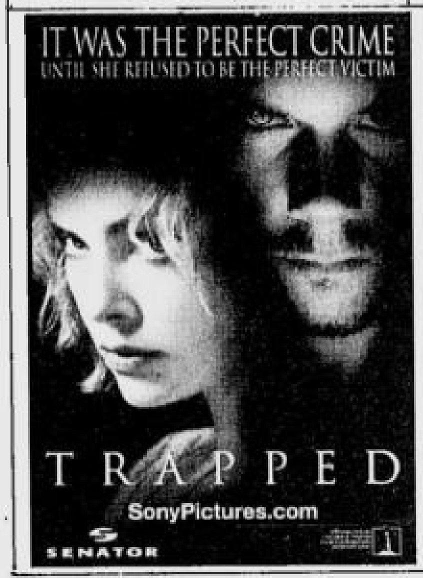
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Professional kidnappers Joe and Cheryl Hickey (Kevin Bacon, *HOLLOW MAN* and Courtney Love, *PEOPLE VS. LARRY FLYNT*) think they have mastered a foolproof plan to extort money from wealthy families.

They kidnap the child of rich parents, hold the kid for 24 hours, keeping the mother under Joe's control while Cheryl gets the ransom from the father, who is on a trip.

But things go very wrong when they try the scheme on Dr. and Mrs. Will Jennings (Charlize Theron, *SWEET NOVEMBER* and Stuart Townsend, *QUEEN OF THE DAMNED*), in part because their daughter Abby (Dakota Fanning, *I AM SAM*) is asthmatic, and in part because the Jennings find out more than Joe Hickley wants them to know.

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Local animators in talks over new deals from int'l expo

LOCAL animation companies which participated in the Annecy 2002 International Animated Film Market held recently in France are hoping to close $1.612 million worth of new contracts with various foreign companies present at the four-day exhibit.

Held simultaneously with the most prestigious animated film festival in the world, the exhibit was participated in by 703 companies and drew visitors from various countries such as France, Korea, the United States, Spain, the United Kingdom, Canada, India, and the Netherlands. The biggest European and American studios and TV channels attended the event.

Animation Council of the Philippines Inc., Artfarm Asia Animation and Digital Exchange, Fil-Cartoons Inc., Holy Cow! Animation Inc., Philippine Animation Studio Inc., and Quanxi Communications Inc. received close to a hundred trade inquiries at the event, more than half of which were from animated film producers and the rest from service companies, animation tool manufacturers, distributors, TV channels, training institutes, and other industry participants. The inquiries centered on the services being offered by the Philippine animation studios, ranging from pre-production (including storyboarding, scriptwriting, and character design) to production (including layouting, backgrounding, in-betweening, and digital ink application and painting) and post-production (including editing, dialogue application, musical scoring, and voice dubbing).

Felicidad V. Tan-Co, executive director of the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (Citem), the Department of Trade and Industry's export promotions agency which organized the Philippines' participation in the event, said that the main value proposition of the local animation firms were the country's highly artistic, creative and multiculturally adaptable animators. These skills, combined with the reasonable costs of the country's animation services, have made the Philippines a preferred outsourcing services partner of such big studios as Walt Disney and Hanna Barbera, and for such major productions as Nickelodeon and Japanese Anime cartoons.

Offshore outsourcing is made possible by information technology, which enables local companies to send their animation output to their global clients in real time.

Citem hopes to further boost the business prospects of local animation companies in Year 3 of e-Services Philippines, the country's unique showcase of its world-class IT outsourcing capabilities. The exhibit, which will be held from Feb. 13 to 15, 2003 at the World Trade Center in Pasay City, will feature Philippine-registered outsourcing services providers in the contact center, back office operations, animation, medical/legal transcription, and software development industries, which are the five areas that the DTI has singled out for focused promotion.

Participation by these firms will thus be partly subsidized by the government. For the first time, though, foreign IT companies are also being invited to feature their new technologies at the exhibit. A competition on original animation content will also be held for professionals and students, details of which will be announced later. e-Services Philippines will be open to both local and foreign visitors.

Interested parties can call Citem's IT services and electronics division at 832-5044 or 831-2201 locals 301 or 212, or e-mail itservices@citem.com.ph, or log on to www.e-servicesphils.com.

2ND RP EGG SHOW A SUCCESS

The Second Philippine Egg Show sponsored by the National Federation of Egg Producers of the Philippines (NFEPP) was another success as it attracted close to 50,000 visitors at the Megatrade Halls 2 and 3 of the SM Megamall in Mandaluyong. With this, the Philippine Egg Show continues a tradition of being one of the most anticipated agri-based events in the Philippines. Shown are Agriculture Undersecretary Cesar Drilon, Mandaluyong Mayor Ben Hur Abalos, officers of the NFEPP led by chair Gregorio San Diego Jr., and Dr. Dante Palabrica of Universal Robina Corp. during the egg-breaking ceremony.

Tech forum in Davao

3COM, the world's leader in networking, is taking the successful 3Com University Live! networking seminar to Davao this November. The two-day conference (Nov. 14 to 15) is a joint effort of 3Com, its exclusive Philippine distributor, Microwarehouse Inc., and the Association of Computer Businesses of the Phils. (ACBP) Davao Chapter. The ACBP is composed of major IT players in Davao whose aim is to develop product excellence, improve customer relations, and standardize and improve the quality of services in Davao. Seminar modules are based on the 3Com University Training Courses that were designed specifically for IT professionals who want to understand networking and be exposed to the latest technologies. For further details, call Microwarehouse Davao at (82)222-2192.

APC APPOINTS MSI DIGILAND

American Power Conversion, market leader in uninterruptible power supplies (UPS), has appointed MSI Digiland (Philippines) Inc. as distributor for its line of UPS and power manageability solutions. Among the APC UPSs that MSI Digiland will distribute include the award-winning APC Smart-UPS and Back-UPS series. MSI Digiland's addition to APC's team of distributors further strengthens APC's foothold on the business networks segment. Shown are APC country manager Jason Lim and MSI Digiland president and CEO Jimmy Go signing the agreement. Standing, from left, are MSI Digiland product manager Cherry Ladringan, APC channels manager Don Herana and MSI Digiland sales and marketing manager Fay Supremo.

Veritas Software holds Windows Solutions Day seminar

VERITAS Software, the leading storage software provider, will be holding a half-day seminar on how to increase business operational efficiency and maximize data availability to a growing Windows enterprise. Dubbed VERITAS Windows Solutions Day, the event will be held at Rizal Ballroom C of Makati Shangri La, today, Nov. 8, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Technology leaders of small-to-medium enterprise and even high-end data center enterprise markets can have an insight on the complete and integrated Veritas offerings spanning data protection, high availability, disaster recovery, and storage virtualization to simplify storage management and optimize application performance for Windows users.

"Veritas Software understands the common challenges experienced by the enterprise markets. This seminar will highlight Veritas' efforts to meet those challenges and ensure enterprise availability and management for growing windows environment," said Darric Hor, regional business development manager, Veritas Software.

Spearheading the event are experts from Veritas Software and Microsoft. Both will share their technology expertise to enable participants to discover the answer to exponential data growth and growing storage needs to be a leader in global business.

For more information, call Reynaldo Jimenez at 887-1753.

KYLA AT DIANA TUNA LAUNCH

Newest diva Kyla joined in the celebration of the launching of the Diana Brand Tuna at Richmonde Hotel. She sang and lightened up the event as she displayed her singing prowess together with Junjun Rivera, president of Philbest Canning Corp. Diana Brand Tuna is the latest addition to the Philbest line of products.

My Special Valentine
Nokia 8310 Raffle PROMO

NOKIA WINNER

Corazon Balayo (center) of Malibay, Pasay City, poses with Dottie Pineda and Marilou Medina of Bookware Publishing Corp. after she received her prize in the monthly draw of the Nokia 8310 Raffle Promo at the company's offices in Pasig City. For the readers of My Special Valentine (MSV) pocketbooks, the promo lasts up to February 2003. For inquiries, call 631-8893 to 94.

Product FILES

Sony's high-tech camcorders

SONY Philippines Inc., the country's market leader in consumer electronics, offers new breakthroughs in digital video camera technology to its Filipino buyers. The DCR-IP5 and the DCR-IP45 are the smallest and lightest camcorders to be found anywhere, and is seen by Sony to create raves in the market because of its MicromV format. MicromV format, developed by Sony, enables high-quality image recording. The MicromV also employs MPEG2 data compression technology, which is widely used in digital satellite broadcasting and DVD video.

BITS Clips

Alvarez speaks for iAME

THE INTERNATIONAL Academy of Management and Economics (iAME) will be holding its 24th Commencement Exercises today, Nov. 8, at the Fiesta Pavilion Grand Ballroom, Manila Hotel from 2 to 6 p.m. Students from iAME's degree and MBA programs will attend this year's commencement exercises entitled "The Importance of Human Agency on Environmental Ethics." To deliver the Commencement Address, iAME chose Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez. Alvarez has been the leading figure of the environmental movement both in the Senate and Congress. He was responsible for the introduction of unleaded gasoline in the country, and one of the principal authors of the Clean Air Act.

Traveling alone isn't boring

MATCH Trip Travel Club helps singles to have fun in an exciting way. Busy singles will have the opportunity to travel with singles like them in various places in the country. For three eventful days, one can enjoy the company of singles in the exotic Club Noah in Palawan. This is a one-of-a-kind experience of private shore excursions, entertainment (such as games, musical and dance performances), scuba diving, surfing, fishing, kayaking. Unique matching activities such as participation in dynamic e-mail exchange prior to the event, switching tables each night to meet new singles, beach and yacht parties are in line. The package is inclusive of buffet meals, cocktails—everything a single romantic would need. The initial trip is from Nov. 15-17. For more information, visit www.match.ph, e-mail admin@match.ph, or call 741-2811 or 7321542.

Sta. Catalina College homecoming

ALL GRADUATES of Sta. Catalina College, Manila are invited to attend the Annual Alumni Homecoming at the school campus on Nov. 16 at 9:30 a.m. This year's hosts are the Silver Jubilarians Class 1977, Ruby Jubilarians Class 1962 and Golden Jubilarians Class 1952. A lot of surprises have been lined-up. Update your membership. For details, call the secretariat at 734-6861 or 734-6817.

Factory Outlet bazaar

YUPANGCO Exhibits and Shows Inc. (YES) brings back its annual Factory Outlet X-Mas Bazaar 2002 slated on Nov. 9 at Makati Sports Club in Leviste corner Gallardo Streets, Salcedo Village, Makati City from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Now on its 5th year, the one-day Christmas bazaar will showcase diversified product lines such as novelty items, health and beauty products, handicrafts, garments, food, publication, real estate, travel and leisure, Christmas decors, electronics, appliances—all these and more at competitive prices. Proceeds of the bazaar will go to the Life Management Program. Factory Outlet X-Mas Bazaar is sponsored by Philippine Seminars Inc. (PSI), Dollar Rent A Car, Sound Publishing, Yamaha School of Music, YL Finance and Affiliates, 96.3 Lite WRock and Monster Radio RX 93.1. For inquiries, call 899-9817 or 899-9595 loc. 344 or 345

PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY
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Facsimile No (053) 325-7248 E-mail Address ppatac@mozcom.com

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine Ports Authority, invites interested bidders to submit Application for Eligibility and subsequently to Bid for the

A. Name of Project: PROPOSED REHABILITATION OF R.C. PIER PORT OF BAYBAY, BAYBAY, LEYTE
B. Scope of Work:
a. General Expenses
b. Demolition/Disposal Works (1,404.00 sq.m.)
c. Reconstruction of R.C. Pier (1,404.00 sq.m.)
d. Mooring System (26 sets - 25T tee head)

C. Minimum Equipment Requirements

a. One (1) unit Crawler Crane, 30 Tons capacity	Owned
b. Two (2) units Air Compressor, 250 CFM	Owned
c. Four (4) units Jack Hammer	Owned
d. Two (2) units Welding Machine, Engine driven, 400A	Owned
e. Two (2) units Backhoe w/ breaker, .5 cu.m. cap., 76 HP	Owned
f. Three (3) units Concrete Mixer, one bagger	Owned
g. Three (3) units Concrete Vibrator, 3 HP	Owned
h. Two (2) units Bar Cutter	Owned
i. Two (2) units Dump Truck	Owned
j. Four (4) units Cutting Outfit	Owned
k. One (1) unit Forklift	Owned
l. Two (2) units Bar bender	Owned

D. Project Duration: 210 Calendar Days
E. Budget for the Contract: P 13,834,856.22
Sources of Funding: PPA Corporate Fund
Required PCAB Registration & Classification: Medium "A" Ports and Harbors
G. Experience
Similar in nature and complexity with at least 50% of the required quantity for major operations of work as indicated in Form IX, page 2 of 2 of the Eligibility Statement Form
H. Cost of Eligibility Statement Form: P 200.00
Place of Issuance: BAC Secretariat, PMO - Tacloban, Port Area, Tacloban City

Deadline for Submission of Accomplished Eligibility Statement Form: November 22, 2002
Time and date of Pre-bid Conference as well as the submission and opening of bids shall be indicated in the Notice of Eligibility
Only contractor classified and registered with the Philippine Contractor's Accreditation Board (PCAB) with valid and existing Contractor's License and Registration Particulars will be issued Eligibility Forms. The forms are available at the BAC Secretariat, PMO - Tacloban, Port Area, Tacloban City, beginning on the first day of publication of this advertisement. Interested applicants are required to bring a letter of intent and original copy of Contractor's valid PCAB License for verification/authentication purposes.
Bid Documents shall be issued only to eligible licensed contractors upon payment of the non-refundable cost of the documents of P 200.00.
All particulars relative to the eligibility, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the provision of PD 1594 and Executive Order No. 40, Series of 2001 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.
Further information may be obtained from the following:
BAC Secretariat: Tel Nos 321-3374, 321-3373
PPA Website: www.ppa.gov.ph
E-mail Address: ppatac@mozcom.com
The authority reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any informality in the proposals received and to accept such bid most advantageous to the Philippine Ports Authority.

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Port Manager
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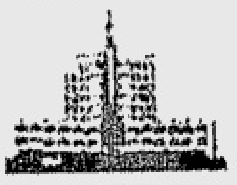

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SAN JUAN

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CONDO/TWNHSE

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ALABANG

Ayalabang/pool 65T 8133827

MAKATI

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SAN JUAN

19RM 55SQM EISENHOWER GH SF 17T QUITO 7265601

G'HILLS 1BR 5268048

APARTMENT

MAKATI

3BR & Studio & Room 8992148

Up/Dwn 2br 1tb w/Grge Nr Buendia w/tel 747-0101

MANILA

5 Units Apt. Sta. Mesa U/D 7154506

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

APARTMENT

PASIG

Kapitolyo 5T & 6T 6312005

QUEZON CITY

1BR Ateneo / Estwd 6815834

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CARS FOR RENT

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GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

NOTICE OF SALE

INDEPENDENT REALTY CORPORATION invites interested buyers for its various furniture, fixtures and paintings on **November 12, 2002,** 2:00-5:00 p.m. at its offices at **IRC Bldg., #82 EDSA, Mandaluyong City.** Cash Buyers Only.

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OFC STAFF 7279971 Ms. Cu

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Office of the President

BCDA

Bases Conversion Development Authority

INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS FOR THE SALE/PURCHASE OR LEASE OF BCDA-OWNED UNITS IN PACIFIC PLAZA TOWERS ASSET DISPOSITION PROGRAM - PHASE 2

The Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) is inviting interested proponents to participate in Phase 2 of BCDA's Asset Disposition Program (ADP-Phase 2). ADP Phase 2 involves, among others, the sale or lease of BCDA-owned units in Pacific Plaza Towers in Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila.

Interested proponents may submit to BCDA their Letters of Interest/Intent and can obtain the Terms of Reference (TOR) for ADP Phase 2 on Pacific Plaza Towers that outline, among others, the requirements that will enable proponents to submit proposals. Real Estate brokers are welcome to sign up as interested proponents, provided that they disclose the name of their clients in their Letters of Intent/Interest to be submitted to BCDA.

The TOR for the sale or lease of BCDA-owned units in Pacific Plaza Towers will be ready for distribution to interested proponents by **11 November 2002** at the BCDA offices.

A conference among interested proponents is tentatively set for 2:00 p.m., **15 November 2002** at the BCDA Office, Old Officers' Clubhouse, Gozar corner Lucas Streets, Villamor Air Base, Pasay City. The objective of the conference is to discuss the properties/units, the TOR and other clarifications from interested proponents/parties. Interested proponents/parties will be informed of the final schedule and venue of the conference through contact numbers submitted to BCDA.

Interested proponents/parties can direct their inquiries to:

THE CHAIRMAN
ADP PHASE 2 COMMITTEE (ADP Com-2) -
Pacific Plaza Towers
BCDA Corporate Center,
Gozar corner Lucas Streets, Villamor Air Base
Pasay City

or they can contact Ms. Aileen R. Zosa, Ms. Cherrie Jongco or Ms. Bambie L. Andal at telephone numbers **510-0420** or **510-0411** or at arzosa@bcda.gov.ph or bandal@bcda.gov.ph.

(Sgd.) **CHAIRMAN**
ADP Phase 2 Committee

(PDI - Nov 8, 12 & 18, 2002)

BENGUET ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Alapang, La Trinidad, Benguet
Tel. Nos. 422-110 / 422-2000
Fax Nos. 422-2848

INVITATION TO A PRE-QUALIFICATION CONFERENCE AND SEALED BIDDING

Interested parties are hereby invited to **PRE-QUALIFICATION CONFERENCE** and **SEALED BIDDING** for the **SUPPLY** and **DELIVERY** of the BENECO'S **LINE HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS** for the **YEAR 2003** on a **STAGGERED DELIVERY** basis.

The **PRE-QUALIFICATION CONFERENCE** will be held on **NOVEMBER 29, 2002** at **10:00 A.M.** at the **2nd FLOOR, BENECO BLDG., KM 4, LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET** where the list of materials for bidding, the technical procedures of the bidding proper and other related matters will be discussed.

SEALED BIDS must be received on or before **DECEMBER 9, 2002** at **12:00 NOON** at the **2nd FLOOR, BENECO BLDG., KM 4, LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET. OPENING** of **BIDS** will be on the same date at **1:00 P.M.**

The following must be submitted during the PRE-QUALIFICATION CONFERENCE: **INCOME TAX RETURNS** for the past 3 years, **AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** and **COMPANY PROFILE** and **LIST OF CLIENTS.**

Only those present during the PRE-QUALIFICATION CONFERENCE and those who were able to submit their **INCOME TAX RETURNS** for the past 3 years, **AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** and **COMPANY PROFILE** and **LIST OF CLIENTS** will be considered during the BIDDING PROPER. ISO-certified manufacturers are preferred.

BENECO reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid deemed most advantageous to the BENECO.

THE PBAC

(PDI - Nov. 8, 15 & 22, 2002)

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OBITUARIES

YORK (U.S.A.) CASKETS
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*For more information, please call your funeral director

CLARO ALEJANDRE LIZARDO III

of Bangued Abra and Tuguegarao City

peacefully joined his Creator on November 3, 2002
at the age of 71.

He is survived by his wife **AMANDA**; children **LIZA, EMILY, CLARO II** and **ANGIE**; grandson **MARC** and **GEO**; brother **SOLOMON**; sister **FE**, in-laws, nephews and nieces.

His body lies in state at the family residence in Tuguegarao City. Mass and necrological services will be held on Sunday, November 10, 2002 at the St. Joseph Chapel, San Jose Village, Tuguegarao after which he will be brought to the family residence in Moncada, Tarlac.

Interment will be on November 13, 2002 at 9:00 a.m. at the Moncada Memorial Park.

JULIAN J. CRUZ

Died in the Peace of our Lord
on November 5, 2002
at the age of 75.

His beloved wife **Felicidad Asuncion Cruz**

Children:
Leni & Jun Santiago
Teri & Dandy Rodriguez

Grandchildren:
Ma. Eliza
Jose Carlo, Jackie & Caille
Anna Patricia
Jose Miguel
Paola Krista
Sara Ysabel
Ma. Dominique

and other relatives and friends request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the family residence at #39 Gold Street, Millionaires Village, Novaliches, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, November 10, 2002 at 9:00 AM at the Holy Cross Memorial Park after the 8:00 AM Mass at the family residence.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
Matthew 10:39

We lovingly remember our Dad on his
Fifth Death Anniversary

MAYOR VICTOR R. MIRANDA

Who joined our Lord on November 8, 1997.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass
will be offered on Friday,
November 8, 2002 at 10:30 a.m. at
HOLY CHILD CATHEDRAL,
Taft Avenue, Manila.

The family requests your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Rosette, Veng, Grace & Teng

> *"Many are the plans in a man's heart,*
> *But it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."*
> Proverbs 19:21

EVANGELINE BANZON CAPILI

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord
on November 3, 2002.

Her bereaved family, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the National Shrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (NSSHJ) on Dao corner Kamagong Streets, Makati City.

Interment will be on Saturday, November 9, 2002 at Manila Memorial Park, Sucat after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at the NSSHJ.

CATALINA GAETOS TAN

Peacefully joined our Creator on October 31, 2002
in Vallejo, California, USA at the age of 90.

Her loving husband **Jose L. Tan** (†); children **Arthur & Rosalita Vizconde, Leticia, Jeffrey & Luz Consuelo Garabato, Peter** (†); grandchildren **Pia Gracinia, John Paul, Alexander & Anthony**; brothers and sisters, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for her eternal repose.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City.

Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City on Sunday, November 10, 2002 after the 8:00 a.m. Holy Mass at Loyola Memorial Chapels.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

ANGEL S. MURILLO

who passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on October 31, 2002

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who, in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.
Always caring... INQUIRER OBITUARIES
OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)
DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT • MESSAGE OF THANKS • DEATH ANNIVERSARY • REQUIEMS • FREE OBIT DESIGN

CLASSIFIEDS

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
KAGAWARAN NG KAGALINGANG PANLIPUNAN AT PAGPAPAUNLAD
(DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT)
BATASAN PAMBANSA COMPLEX, CONSTITUTION HILLS
QUEZON CITY

Republic of the Philippines

Kapitbisig Laban sa Kahirapan - Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services: Kapangyarihan at Kaunlaran sa Barangay (KALAHI-CIDSS; KKB) Project

Consulting Services
Loan No: LOAN NUMBER 7147 PH

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

The Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction (IBRD), and intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for KALAHI-CIDSS : KKB Project for consultancy services of Training Providers on Community Facilitation and Mobilization.

The services include conduct of 1) rapid training needs analysis for sixty-two (62) prospective participants 2) design and development of modules and resource materials 3) management and facilitation and documentation of the training / workshop which will run for fifteen (15) days 4) provision of resource speakers/experts including field coaching for fifteen (15) days which will be done on staggered basis.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development now invites eligible consultants to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services (brochures, description of similar assignments, experience in similar conditions, availability of appropriate skills among staff, etc.). Consultants may associate to enhance their qualifications.

Interested consultants may obtain further information from Ms. Maricris Jacinto of the Property and Supply Division, 2nd floor, DSWD Batasan Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City with telephone nos. (632) 9318161, (632) 9318101 local 125, and fax nos. (632) 9316146 or 9318127.

Expressions of interest must be delivered to the address below on or before 5:00 p.m. of November 15, 2002.

Ms. RHODA F. YAP
Assistant Secretary and Chairperson, BAC
DSWD, Batasan Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City
Tel: (632) 9318161, (632) 9318101 local 125, and Fax nos. 9316146 or 9318127
e-mail address: property@mies.dswd.gov.ph

ATTN: Ms. MARICRIS JACINTO
PROPERTY AND Supply Division, Second floor,
DSWD Batasan Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezopn City
Tel. Nos. (632) 9318161, (632) 9318101 loc. 125, Fax Nos. (632) 9316146 or 9318127

(Sgd.) RHODA F. YAP
Assistant Secretary and Chairperson, BAC
By:
(Sgd.) MA. SUZETTE M. AGCAOILI
Director IV & Vice-Chairperson BAC

(PDI--Nov. 8, 2002)

MOHRI & P.A. Associate, Inc.
Second Floor Casmer Building, 195 Salcedo Street
Legaspi Village, Makati City

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Supply and Delivery of Computers, Printers & Autocadd 2002
(IFB No. Mohri-022002)

TO ALL ELIGIBLE BIDDERS:

1. The Mohri & P.A. Associates, Inc., now invites sealed bids from eligible suppliers who are in the business of supply and delivery of 25 units of Computers, 25 units of Printers and 41 packages of Autocadd 2002.
2. The Mohri & P.A. Associates, Inc., a corporation duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), hereinafter referred to as "Mohri," is a consulting services contractor of the Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP) of the Department of Education. TEEP is project funded by the Philippine Government with loans from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) of the World Bank.
3. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further technical information from Mohri P.A. Associates with offices at Second Floor, Casmer Building, 195 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati City with telephone nos. (02) 892-4609 or 892-4614; Fax nos. (02) 892-4605 or 894-5827. Bid documents shall be available at the said address starting Wednesday, November 13, 2002 upon submission of a letter of intent and payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 300.00.
4. Bids must be submitted to the Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee on the opening of bids to be held at the TEEP Conference Room, Fifth Floor, Bonifacio Building, Department of Education, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, on December 09, 2002 at 10:00 a.m. Deadline for submission of bids is at 10:00 a.m. on December 09, 2002. Bids must be accompanied with a bid security to two (2) percent of total bids price. Bids will be opened in the presence of bidders representatives who choose to attend.

(Sgd.) ARCH. TITO MOISES S. ENCINAS
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Nov. 8, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Ave., Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-6401 • (632) 920-6446
E-mail: *sssemail@info.com.ph* • Web site *http://www.sss.gov.ph*
Visit the SSS website for Bid Invitations

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY & TO BID

SSS EMPLOYEES' RICE REQUIREMENT FOR THE 1ST QUARTER OF CY2003 & BULK PURCHASE OF SUPPLIES & MATERIALS FOR THE 1ST SEMESTER OF CY2003

The **SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM** is inviting bidders for the following:

1. Supply and door-to-door delivery of approximately 7,700 sacks of Freshly Milled Premium Grade Commercial Rice for SSS employees for the first quarter of Year 2003 with the following specifications:
   - Degree of Milling : Well Milled Rice (WMR)
   - Moisture Content : 14% (maximum)
   - Grade Specifications : Headrice — 90% to 95% (minimum) Broken — 10% to 5% (maximum)
   - Packaging : 50 kilos in light yellow woven polyprophylene
   - Labeling : With front & back markings
   - Delivery Terms : Thirty (30) calendar days upon receipt of the Purchase Order (P.O.)

   Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P1,000.00 per sack per employee
   Source of Funding : Capital Expenditures
2. Bulk Purchase of Supplies and Materials Requirement for the First Semester of Year 2003

   Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P9,737,530.13
   Source of Funding : Capital Expenditures

Interested bidders must secure the Eligibility Requirements from the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) Secretariat, 6th Floor, SSS Main Building, East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City. Only eligible bidders shall be required to pay the non-refundable fee of P5,000.00 each for items #1 and #2. For any inquiry, please call telephone numbers 922-2991 or 920-6401 local 5490/5491. Below are the deadlines for the submission of eligibility documents:

Item No.	Deadline
1	November 25, 2002
2	November 26,2002

The SSS reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any formality or technicality, and to award to any bidder whose proposal is deemed most advantageous to the SSS. The SSS neither assumes any obligation for any loss whatsoever that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of their respective bids, nor does the SSS guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) MIGUEL E. ROCA, JR.
Senior Vice President
and Chairman,
Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI - Nov. 8, 2002)

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FORMER Enron finance chief Andrew Fastow (right) arrives at the Federal Courts building with his attorneys in Houston, Texas, to face charges of wire fraud and money laundering. Fastow pleaded not guilty to 78 counts of fraud and other charges in the scandal that led to the spectacular meltdown of the energy giant. AFP

Ex-Enron CFO Fastow pleads innocent

HOUSTON—Former Enron Corp. chief financial officer Andrew Fastow pleaded innocent to a 78-count federal indictment charging him with masterminding complex financial schemes that enriched him and helped doom the energy trading powerhouse.

"Your honor, in answer to each of the charges, I am not guilty," Fastow said Wednesday to US Magistrate Judge Marcia Crone during a five-minute hearing, where he was arraigned alongside a dozen other accused criminals.

Attorneys for Fastow and the US Department of State had no comment after the arraignment.

Fastow, ousted a year ago as Enron spiraled toward bankruptcy, was initially charged Oct. 2 and indicted on Oct. 31 on various counts of fraud, money laundering, conspiracy, obstruction of justice and other charges. Fastow entered his plea Wednesday in Houston.

If convicted, he could face a maximum sentence of 860 years in prison, though under federal sentencing guidelines, he would likely receive far less.

The indictments, returned by a special Enron grand jury in Houston, allege Fastow crafted multiple schemes that produced phantom profits and let him skim millions for himself, his family and inner circle.

Fastow's attorneys have said top Enron executives approved his work and that Fastow did not believe he committed any crimes. Former chief executive officers Jeffrey Skilling and Kenneth Lay were Fastow's immediate superior at different times.

Fastow, 40, is free on $5 million bond. A pretrial conference has been set for Jan. 13. *AP*

Asia hoping US Fed rate cut would lead to economic growth

SINGAPORE—Like the rest of the world, Asia is hoping the Federal Reserve's aggressive rate cut stems from a determination to kick-start the economy rather than desperation that crumbling confidence is pointing to a new recession.

The Fed cut the US federal funds target rate by 50 basis points to 1.25 percent, when 25 had been forecast. The Fed said the cut should help to counter some of the uncertainty inhibiting the economy, and adopted a neutral policy bias.

The sharp cut and neutral bias appeared to be a move to convince markets that the Fed is decisive and still confident.

"What's obvious from it is that they would be unhappy with a 25-basis-point cut and then the lingering thought in the market that there was going to be more," said Jan Lambregts, head of Asia-Pacific research at Rabobank Group Treasury.

"They wanted to move now, they wanted to move decisively," he said, but added there was a bit of bluff in the stance.

"I don't really believe that the Fed knows that much more than the market does." The rate cut pushed the US dollar lower, and although Asian currencies were stronger on the day they were still below their multi-week highs reached earlier this week.

For Asia, the fortunes of the United States are key, especially given the lackluster growth of Japan and Europe.

The United States is the region's biggest export market and an important source of investment. A downturn there cannot only hurt Asian activity through falling demand, but also by cutting into the flow of funds into local markets.

"I think in general it should be a positive decision for Asian economies, because it means the US growth should pick up earlier than anticipated," said Karl Broecker, head of treasury at Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg.

"It could mean that Asian currencies would benefit from that, because investors see this as a positive signal for picking up some Asian equities."

Another supporting factor for the US economy was that with the Republican Party winning control of Congress, the government would be better able to introduce tax cuts and extra spending, and business sentiment may be lifted.

The lower cash rate could also prompt some equity investment or see funds head offshore as investors seek higher yields. *Reuters*

Asian markets weigh Fed cut, Cisco forecast

SINGAPORE—Asian shares see-sawed on Thursday as the Federal Reserve's hefty rate cut renewed worries over the US economy, while a bearish outlook from technology bellwether Cisco Systems also cast a shadow over the markets.

The dollar was on the defensive as fresh doubts about the outlook for the world's biggest economy emerged following the Fed's larger-than-expected half-point cut.

Tokyo stocks were lower after Cisco, the top maker of equipment used to run the Internet, posted earnings that were better than expected for the first quarter but said sales in the current quarter might fall.

Still, traders did not expect the Tokyo market to come off too far, given that the US Nasdaq index posted a sixth straight day of gains on Wednesday, boosted by the Fed's rate cut and a sweeping Republican election win.

"Cisco's forecast for the current quarter could knock some of the wind out of the Nasdaq's recent run," said Yusuke Sakai, manager of equities at Mizuho Securities. "But selling is not so heavy and some of the electronics stocks are firm. I don't see much further downside from here."

By 0130 GMT, the Nikkei average had lost 0.72 percent to 8,888.63 after rising more than 3 percent the past three sessions to a two-week high on Wednesday. The broader TOPIX index was off 0.59 percent to 877.99.

Cisco's stock was lower in after-hours trade after an initial jump on the results. Some analysts and investors thought Cisco would forecast flat to higher sales in its fiscal second quarter, historically a strong period for the industry.

Nasdaq futures on Globex were down around one percent.

On Wednesday, the Nasdaq index gained for a sixth straight day after the Federal Reserve cut the overnight rate to bolster the faltering economy and following a historic Republican sweep of the US House and Senate in Tuesday's elections.

"A combination of the Fed's big cut and the Republicans' free hand in shaping policy should do much to allay concerns of a double-dip recession in the United States," said Norihiro Fujito, senior investment strategist at Mitsubishi Securities.

South Korean shares were up 0.31 percent in early trade, Taiwan's benchmark TAIEX was up 1.15 percent and Singapore was a tad higher at the open.

The Fed's half-percentage-point cut brings borrowing costs to a fresh 40-year low.

The dollar weakened on the rate cut news and was trading at around parity to the euro and 121.84 to the yen.

The jumbo cut caught Wall Street by surprise and stocks initially rose, then fell, and rose again.

Many investors had expected a smaller, quarter-percentage-point cut and debated whether the big cut spelled a healthier economic rebound or signaled an economy in surprisingly poor health. *Reuters*

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DoCoMo H1 profit drops

A PEDESTRIAN uses her mobile phone before an NTT DoCoMo shop in downtown Tokyo. AFP

TOKYO—NTT DoCoMo Inc., Japan's dominant mobile carrier, posted a 95.3-percent fall in half-year net profit and slashed its full-year outlook on Thursday, hurt by soured overseas investments for a second straight year.

DoCoMo reported a group net profit of 4.17 billion yen ($34.28 million) for April-September, a fraction of the profit of 89.2 billion yen in the same period a year earlier.

Both figures are based on US accounting standards, which DoCoMo shifted to this year from the Japanese method.

First-half sales totaled 2.38 trillion yen, up 1.9 percent from the same period last year.

For the full year to March, DoCoMo, which boasts a domestic market share of 58 percent, now expects a group net profit of 182 billion yen.

That compares with an original forecast based on the Japanese accounting standard in May of 511 billion yen.

The weak results and the revision were widely expected since DoCoMo said in October it would take an appraisal loss of 573 billion yen on overseas investments for the first half.

"For this interim period, we knew they would be around break-even. I thought they might be a little negative. But apparently, it's not the case . . . So that would be a positive (factor)," said Kirk Boodry, an analyst at Dresdner Kleinwort Wasserstein.

Prior to the announcement, shares in DoCoMo, the wireless unit of Nippon Telegraph and Telephone Corp., Japan's top telecoms company, closed Thursday trade unchanged at 241,000 yen. The Nikkei average was down 0.37 percent.

DoCoMo has invested 1.9 trillion yen to take minority stakes in several foreign carriers to promote its "i-mode" wireless Internet technology and lay the foundations for third-generation mobile services.

But the strategy backfired after the bursting of the tech and telecoms share-price bubble. DoCoMo took a charge of more than 900 billion yen on its overseas assets last business year, which ended in March.

In a widely flagged move, DoCoMo cut the subscriber target in Japan for its third-generation (3G) mobile phones to 320,000 by next March, down from the original target of 1.38 million. *Reuters*

SingTel 6-mo profit falls

SINGAPORE—Singapore Telecommunications Ltd. said Thursday first half net profit dived by a third due to costs associated with its takeover of Optus in Australia and a weak performance in its home market.

The net profit of 792 million Singapore dollars ($450 million) in the six months to September was well down on market expectations.

Last year's acquisition of Optus saw operating revenue rise to $4.92 billion from $2.50 billion the previous year.

Excluding the goodwill charges on the Optus purchase, SingTel said net profit would have been $1.11 billion in the first half.

Singapore's sluggish economic growth and growing competition weighed on SingTel's operations at home.

Operating revenue for the half year in Singapore was $2.38 billion, down 4.7 percent from last year, with falls in income from data and Internet services and international calls. Mobile phone revenue increased by 8.5 percent.

The company, which also has operations in Australia, India and Southeast Asia, said it expects stronger second half revenue and profit.

"Our international investments have transformed SingTel's financial profile and we now derive more than 60 percent of our proportionate revenues from outside Singapore," SingTel president Lee Hsien Yang said.

"As a result, we remain well positioned for above average growth despite the slower than expected recovery in the Singapore economy," Lee said.

In the second quarter net profit was $415 million, up 10 percent from $377 million a year earlier, but this was largely due to a one-off gain of $230 million from its European associate Belgacom.

An analyst with a local brokerage said: "SingTel's results were largely lower than market estimates due to the effect of taxes . . . Overall growth outside Singapore remains intact." *AFP*

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A Special Feature

STRATEGIC PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERSHIPS FOR URBAN POVERTY (STEP-UP) REDUCTION IN METRO MANILA

STEP-UP Program: A Collective Effort by the Business Community to invest in the Poor

Recent data shows that urban poverty in the Philippines is increasing. With a continuing influx of rural migrants to the city in search of a better life, the living standards of urban poor communities have worsened. It is estimated that 35% of Metro Manila's population live in slum areas with inadequate access to potable water, substandard homes, and poor sanitation. Such depressed settlements are growing at 4.4% annually, at a pace nearly twice the overall average for Metro Manila.

The problem of housing and security of land tenure in poverty stricken urban communities has been at the core of the government's campaign to win the war against poverty. Under, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's leadership, with the Housing and Urban Development Council and other government agencies have formulated the country's Medium-Term Development Plan for Shelter. The key aim is to reduce the backlog of 3.5 million homes by providing affordable housing units and improve living conditions. Steps include providing better housing terms such as the reduction of interest rates for housing loans, securing land tenure through the government's Community Mortgage Program (CMP), and strengthening policies to apprehend and prosecute professional squatting syndicates that prey on the urban poor. Secretary Michael Defensor, Chairman of HUDCC, notes, "For the government to succeed in achieving its plans, we will have to find innovative, sustainable strategies that address the shelter problem and draw in support from the private sector.

COLLECTIVE BUSINESS RESPONSE TO POVERTY

In response to the widespread problem of urban poverty and the government's call for support, Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) is stepping up its efforts in promoting sound urban development, and better opportunities for the urban poor. This complements PBSP's rural development strategy.

Established in 1970, PBSP - is the leading non-stock, non-profit, corporate-led social development Foundation with a membership of more than 160 companies. These companies have come together to express their collective commitment to tackle the many challenges of poverty found among landless and marginal farmers, fisherfolk, indigenous communities, and the urban poor. As a member of PBSP, companies are given an opportunity to reaffirm and express their commitment to become responsible corporate citizens. As defined by PBSP, Corporate Citizenship is a business principle based on the view that the long-term interest of business is best served when its profitability and growth are accomplished alongside the development of communities, the protection and sustainability of the environment and the improvement of the people's quality of life.

Mr. Manuel V. Pangilinan, Chairman of PBSP and President & CEO of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, stresses that "businesses cannot exist in an island of prosperity amidst a sea of poverty".

INTEGRATED URBAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

From 1991 to 1996, PBSP, through its NCR-Area Resource Management (NCR-ARM) Program, adopted six CMP communities involving almost 800 families in Marikina, Paranaque, Mandaluyong, Las Pinas and Taguig. Common problems face by these communities includes flooding, poor drainage system, lack of paved roads and alleys, poor access to potable water facilities, makeshift dilapidated houses, and weak community organizations. Most notably, unemployment rates were high and those lucky enough to have jobs earned meager incomes.

Through an integrated urban development approach, PBSP's program focused comprehensively addressing the communities' problem, assisting through, organizational development, site improvement through the provision of roads and drainage, livelihood credit and skills upgrading, and access to basic services such as potable water, health and sanitation, and primary education.

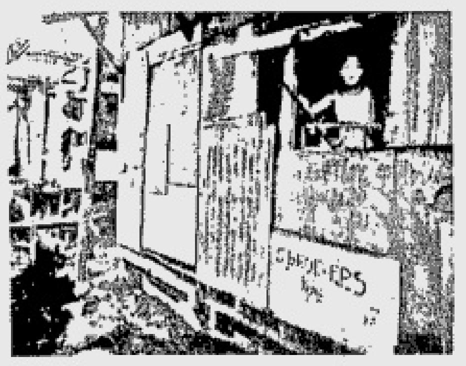
The success of the program was clearly evident. The impact of the various interventions led to increased land values, improved living conditions and health and sanitation, and increased economic activity within the community. Household incomes grew from an additional ₱ 1,000 to as much as ₱ 15,000 per month, providing a real and tangible means of escape from poverty.

These initiatives were undertaken through assistance – both financial and in-kind, coming mostly from the corporate sector. Financial and banking institutions, companies in the construction industry, and a range of other businesses, readily adopted projects or communities located near to their headquarter or satellite offices. This relationship the corporate community-relations initiative, encouraging the involved companies to take a direct role supporting the economic and social transformation of their adopted communities.

PROMOTING SELF-REIANCE AND RESPONSIBILITY

The message however was clear from the very beginning. This program was not a dole out. Leaders and members of the Homeowner's Associations understood that PBSP and its corporate partners would not be there to help forever. "Our role is to help people help themselves", says Mrs. Ma. Luisa Perez-Rubio, President of PBSP.

For communities to sustain their initial gains, local people's organizations had to persevere and work together in order to provide their share to the success of the program. As a policy, sweat equity was required of the residents for the construction of roads and multi-purpose centers, while mandatory loan repayments were instituted for the micro-finance fund to assist women entrepreneurs. These were all part of PBSP's comprehensive strategy to ensure sustainability, building self-reliance and responsibility among beneficiaries after program life.



OF SLUMS, Homes and Children. New hopes come to this child who is one of the 35,000 beneficiaries of the new ADB-PBSP strategic partnership

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

Learning from the experience of the NCR-ARM Program, PBSP applied a enhanced approach in a follow-on initiative. In 1997, similar depressed communities were adopted in Taguig and Muntinlupa. This time, however, focus was placed on establishing multi-sectoral partnerships. This meant working closely with the business community, local government units, people's organizations, and various non-government organizations, bringing together all stakeholders in new partnerships. PBSP's new role was to facilitate the coordination among these various organizations, who all had a stake in the development of their local municipality or city.

While the business community was not strategically involved in the beginning, the program and the role of many in the business community evolved. Today, rather than just being looked upon as a funding source for projects or stand alone events and activities, companies like Fort Bonifacio Development Corporation are engaged more broadly in development, such as with their support to crafting the municipal development plans. Local community leaders have been empowered through the process and are increasingly given a seat at the discussion and negotiating table, especially during decision-making on land tenure and community site development issues. Local government and national line agencies, on the other hand, recognize the importance of participation, consultation and genuine partnership in the delivery of much needed services to their constituents.

PBSP has also realized that it is efficient in achieving its goals by working with like-minded not-for-profit organizations already on site. The idea is not to replicate what other NGOs are doing, but rather enhance and complement each other's efforts. As a result, on-going housing construction projects are being implemented in partnership with the Habitat for Humanity chapters in Taguig and Muntinlupa. This scheme maximizes the resources of the partners.

SCALING UP

Recognizing that the growing problem of urban poverty and unserviced slums must be tackled, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) is taking the lead in pilot-testing new approaches for on-site urban upgrading and off-site relocation of informal settlers under the Japan Fund for Poverty Reduction (JFPR) program. This innovative fund has been established by generous assistance from the Government of Japan.

Upon hearing of PBSP's collective business model for poverty alleviation, as well as its extensive track record in urban upgrading, a new program has been designed to, expand and document integrated approach to urban poverty reduction in Metro Manila.

As Mathew Westfall, a Principal Urban Development at ADB and officer in-charge of the program, points out "We have initiated several pilot activities, the latest being the PBSP program that aims to promote corporate involvement in a more meaningful way, with strategic, focused and measurable impact on the lives of the urban poor."

PBSP's collective business model for poverty alleviation as well as its extensive experience in urban upgrading was cited as pioneering in the field. "ADB is working with HUDCC, local governments and selected communities to make Metro Manila a showcase project for urban poverty reduction", he adds.

STEP-UP PROGRAM

After a year of developing and fine tuning the program proposal, the Strategic Private Sector Partnerships for Urban Poverty reduction program in Metro Manila or STEP-UP is now a reality. A JFPR grant in the amount of $ 3.6 million will come from an ADB, which will leverage an initial $ 3.33 million equivalent in Philippine pesos in financial and in-kind counterpart assistance from the private sector.

With HUDCC as the executing agency and PBSP as the implementing agency, the STEP-UP Program is a corporate-led strategy which employs an innovative integrated urban development approach.

STEP-UP aims to reduce poverty and improve the living conditions of 5,823 urban poor families in 23 communities from nine cities in Metro Manila, namely Malabon, Caloocan, Mandaluyong, Manila, Marikina, Quezon City, Pasig, Taguig and Muntinlupa.

Says Mr. Juan B. Santos, PBSP Board of Trustee and Chairman and CEO of Nestle Philippines, Inc., "In the initial stages, PBSP conducted a thorough assessment of the communities it has selected. While we will also have to prioritize the communities and municipalities in the first year, and build the program over time, we are also looking for visible, high-profile results."

The program will be anchored on building and strengthening strategic public-private partnerships in 3 levels. *First*, partnerships will involve the collaboration of the private sector through a Business Consensus Group. The purpose will be to encourage more businesses to engage by providing financial assistance, employee volunteers, skills sharing and mentoring and even sub-contracting products and services with assisted communities. "When you look at the scope and scale of the problem here in Metro Manila, says Mr. Westfall, it is clear that everyone needs to be involved, especially the corporate sector. Government will not be able to address the problem on its own, we all need to come together in this issue."

Second, partnerships will be established in the form of functioning multi-sectoral coalitions, where local government, NGOs, people's organizations/homeowners associations (HOA), national line agencies, business establishments, and academe, will oversee the coordination and implementation of their specific housing and interrelated community programs. Regarding the vital role of partnering with NGOs, Speaking of working with NGO's, Mr. Pedro Roxas, PBSP Board of Trustee and CEO of Central Azucarrera Don Pedro, says "What is important is that we don't duplicate what others are doing. We need to tap the expertise of and ensure that our support leverages and complements what they are already doing".

Lastly, at the community level, partnerships will be created as part of the capability building activities to be provided for the involved for the homeowner's associations. Although associations with good track records and cohesive communities have been selected, this assistance will empower and build the confidence of these organizations to actively participate in the program and also become more responsible for their own community's growth and improvement.

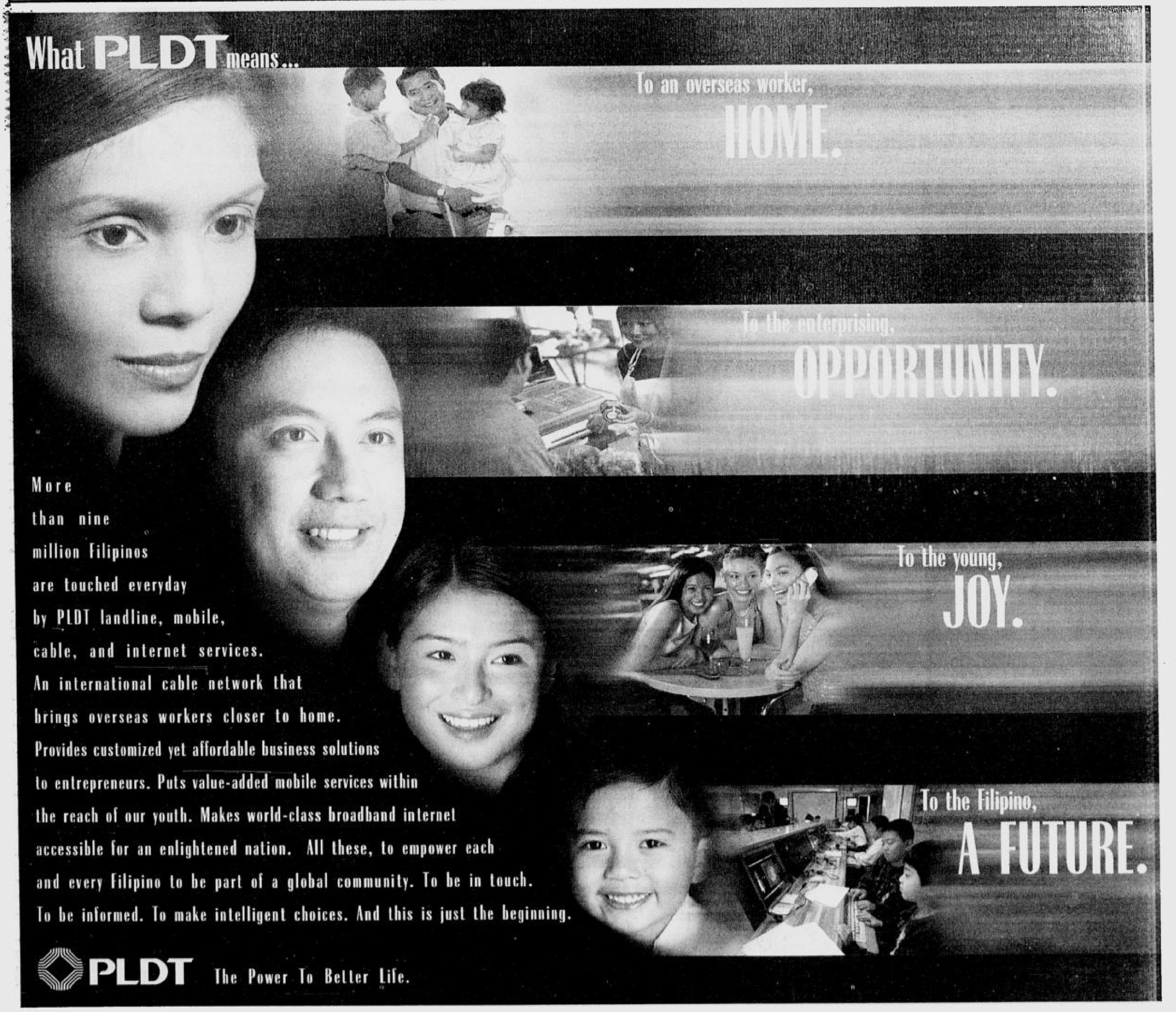
Very much like PBSP's integrated urban development approach, housing improvement, micro-enterprise and livelihood fund assistance will be provided to the adopted local communities. Since CMP sites have been selected, revolving funds for housing improvement will be made available. The loan per single family may range anywhere between ₱ 15,000 – ₱ 70,000, depending on the need. The private sector can also participate through housing materials donation and/or technical assistance for architectural housing designs. A revolving fund will also be established to provide loans to qualified micro-entrepreneurs. There will also be a one-time grant assistance to the communities for the construction of water facilities, drainage, roads, re-blocking and other infrastructure needed in the community, such as multi-purpose centers which are used as day care centers, and training centers.

An added feature of the STEP-UP Program is the Risk Reduction and Management component for urban poor communities. Since most of these communities are prone to floods, fire, and other disasters, the program will help develop people's capabilities in preventing and responding to disasters as well as provide basic equipment for disaster mitigation. This aim is to protect and preserve the hard earned development gains made in these communities from the risk of disasters.

"There will inevitable be challenges along the way, say Mr. Pangilinan. "It can always be an excuse on the part of corporations that the economy is tough, sales are down, but the fact of the matter is, a number of leading corporations have core business revenues that are pretty solid, and there is an opportunity to build on that. Business has to be visible active in the fight on poverty."

Businesses need not go out of their way. "If a company can start in its own backyard, and look at its core business, it should find a way to engage and adopt components of the program. It is manageable", said Mr. Santos.

For more information, please contact
The Executive Director
Philippine Business for Social Progress
Tel No. 527-7741 to 51
Fax No. 527-3743
E-mail: pbsp@pbsp.org.ph
Web: http://www.pbsp.org.ph



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PLDT The Power To Better Life.

JAPAN'S computer giant executive Kazuhiro Igarashi (left) displays the new tablet PC Fujitsu's "FMV STYLISTIC TB80" while Japan Hewlett-Packard executive Makoto Baba displays "Compaq Tablet PC TC1000" at a Tokyo hotel as US software giant Microsoft announced the new OS "Windows XP Tablet PC Edition." Fujitsu started to sell the FMV STYLISTIC Nov. 7 with an estimated price of 300,000 yen ($2,500) and Hewlett-Packard will put the Compaq Tablet PC on the market next month with a price of 219,000 yen ($1,825). AFP

BOJ member rejects monetary easing steps

HAKODATE, Japan—A member of the Bank of Japan's Policy board on Thursday rejected unorthodox monetary easing steps such as inflation targeting, raised by some government officials as a way to stem persistent deflation.

"Even if we were to directly control long-term interest rates and asset prices such as stocks and real estate, it is inconclusive what the effects would be," board member Teizo Taya told a business conference in Hakodate, northern Japan.

"With such limited means, we cannot promise to achieve a set rate of price changes under a set time frame, and even if we were to make such a promise, we could not attain credibility."

But Taya, a former economist at a major think tank, said he could accept a weaker yen if deflationary pressures increased amid efforts to clean up non-performing loans in the financial sector, officially estimated at 52 trillion yen ($427.5 billion).

"The yen could decline if deflation increased and economic conditions worsened as a result of speedier disposal of banks' nonperforming loans. In such a case, it is not necessary to reject and reverse it," he told a news conference.

But it would not be "sensible" for the BOJ to deliberately weaken the yen by purchasing foreign bonds as part of its money market operations.

"If foreign bond buying by the BOJ includes the purpose of pushing the yen lower, it is not a sensible policy under current conditions. Exchange market stability through intervention is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Finance," he said.

"The BOJ could purchase foreign bonds, but I don't think that is a sensible policy at present."

The dollar has been losing ground against other major currencies on growing concerns over the US economy. Sentiment remained bearish in the wake of an aggressive easing by the US Federal Reserve on Wednesday.

A rising yen would likely exacerbate deflationary pressures in Japan and hurt the nation's tentative export-led recovery.

But Finance Minister Masajuro Shiokawa told parliament on Thursday that the government should not interfere with currency markets and exchange rates should be determined by markets.

"We should refrain as much as possible from manipulating currency rates," he told the Lower House.

"Foreign exchange rates should be determined by the market and reflect economic fundamentals," he added.

Taya said fund demand and expected market reactions would be among the factors the bank would consider in deciding on a further increase in its purchases of Japanese government bonds. *Reuters*

FedEx CEO says US economy growing at 'lackluster' rate

BOSTON—The head of FedEx Corp., the air-express and transport giant that carries millions of packages daily, on Wednesday said the US economy was growing at a "lackluster" rate.

Fred Smith, chief executive and founder of FedEx, told reporters after speaking at a business luncheon here that a work stoppage at West Coast ports last month did more harm to the economy than most Americans realize.

"I think the economy is tepid at the moment. The (port shutdown) had a bigger effect than most people think," Smith said on the sidelines of Boston College's Chief Executives Club.

"I think the economy is growing, but it is simply growing at a lackluster rate," he said.

Smith said FedEx itself had not suffered from the 10-day West Coast port work stoppage, which paralyzed billions of dollars worth of US trade and hit discretionary spending by US consumers.

He noted that the company had added four or five trans-Pacific flights per week at the height of the stoppage as businesses airlifted some goods to or from Asia to get around bottled-up US seaports.

Separately, FedEx said it applied to the US Department of Transportation to operate 12 more flights to Hong Kong to expand its access to Asia. The company currently operates 194 flights and charters 44 more into and out of Hong Kong each month.

Smith added that the port shutdown had not hurt FedEx's ground transportation business, which tends to deal in shipments of 1,500 pounds or less—not the truckloads of goods that would have been hit by the stoppage.

"Most of the stuff coming out of the West Coast is moving in (truckloads), and our business—whether FedEx Ground, FedEx Freight or FedEx Express—is in small shipments," he said. *Reuters*

Asian salary growth slows: survey

HONG KONG—Asia Pacific companies have reacted to the global economic downturn this year by offering lower salary increases or freezing pay, a survey revealed Thursday.

The Indian information technology (IT) sector recorded the strongest wage increase of 16.4 percent this year, the survey conducted by consulting firm Hewitt Associates showed.

India was followed by the Philippines, China, Korea and Indonesia which offered average salary hikes of between 6.4 percent and almost 10 percent.

The most widespread wage freezes this year were experienced in Hong Kong where 45 percent of companies held pay steady, followed by Indonesia with 33 percent.

China and Thailand had the lowest number of firms imposing salary freezes with with 7 percent and 8 percent respectively.

"The smaller salary increases and the extent of total pay freezes recorded across the region do not come as a big surprise considering the continuing struggle of the global economies affecting most businesses in Asia Pacific," said Mick Bennett, Asia Pacific managing director for Hewitt Associates.

"The relatively higher average salary increases witnessed in China, India and Korea reflect the rapid development of these economies and continued foreign investment, despite the global downturn."

Companies from the developed economies of Hong Kong and Singapore followed the trend established over the past two years, by offering the lowest average salary increases ranging between 0.6-1.8 percent and 2.1-2.9 percent respectively.

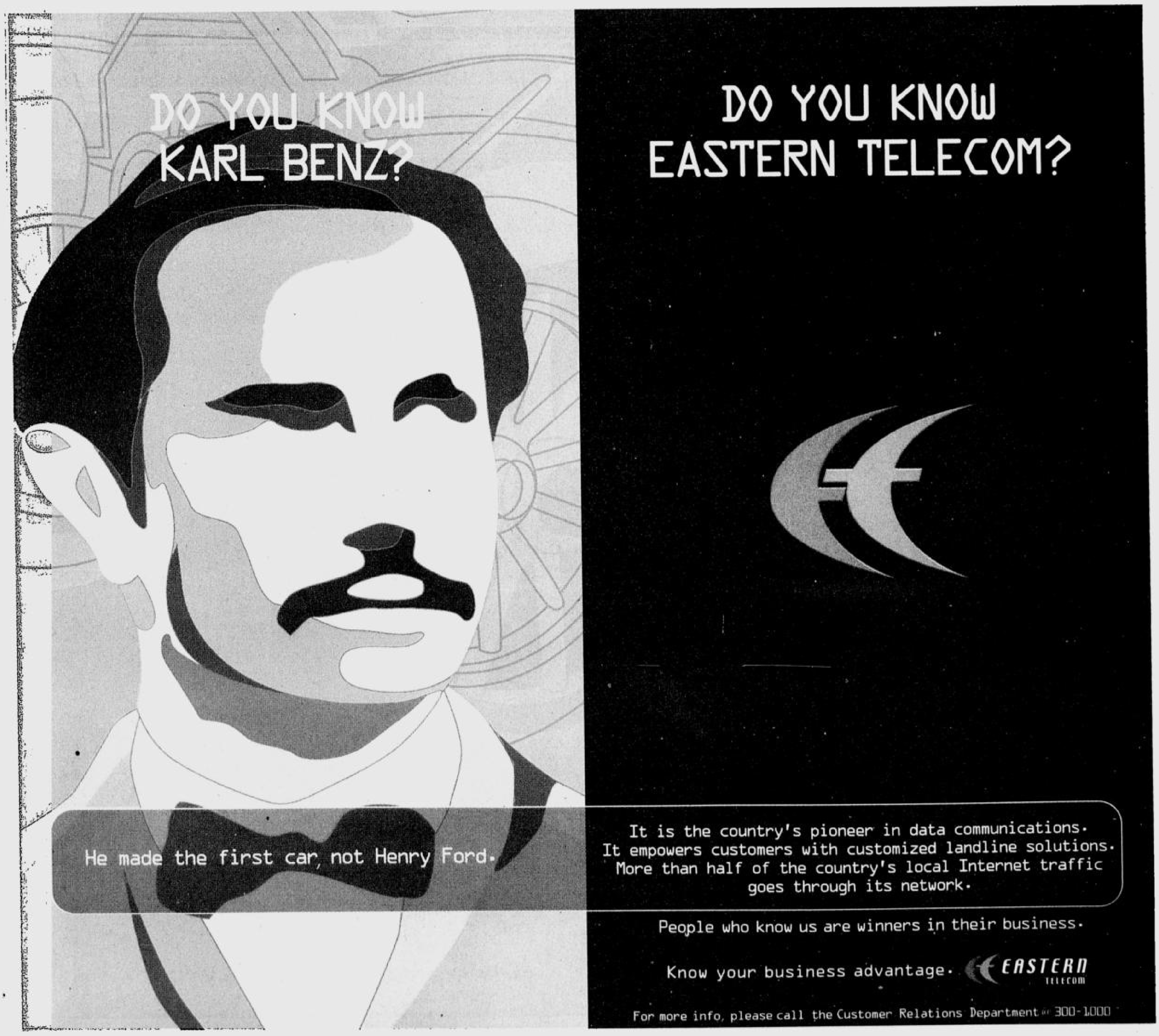
Most companies surveyed projected a slight rise in salary increases next year, except South Korea which expected salaries to remain flat overall.

Indonesian employers were the most optimistic with salaries tipped to soar almost 12-14 percent next year, compared with gains of 6.4-9.7 percent in 2002.

Around one in four of all companies in the region expressed concerns about attracting and retaining suitable employees.

Other countries deeply affected by the issues of attraction and retention were India, Korea and Thailand.

"There is still a talent crunch in countries with developing economies such as China, India and Korea," said Bennett. *AFP*



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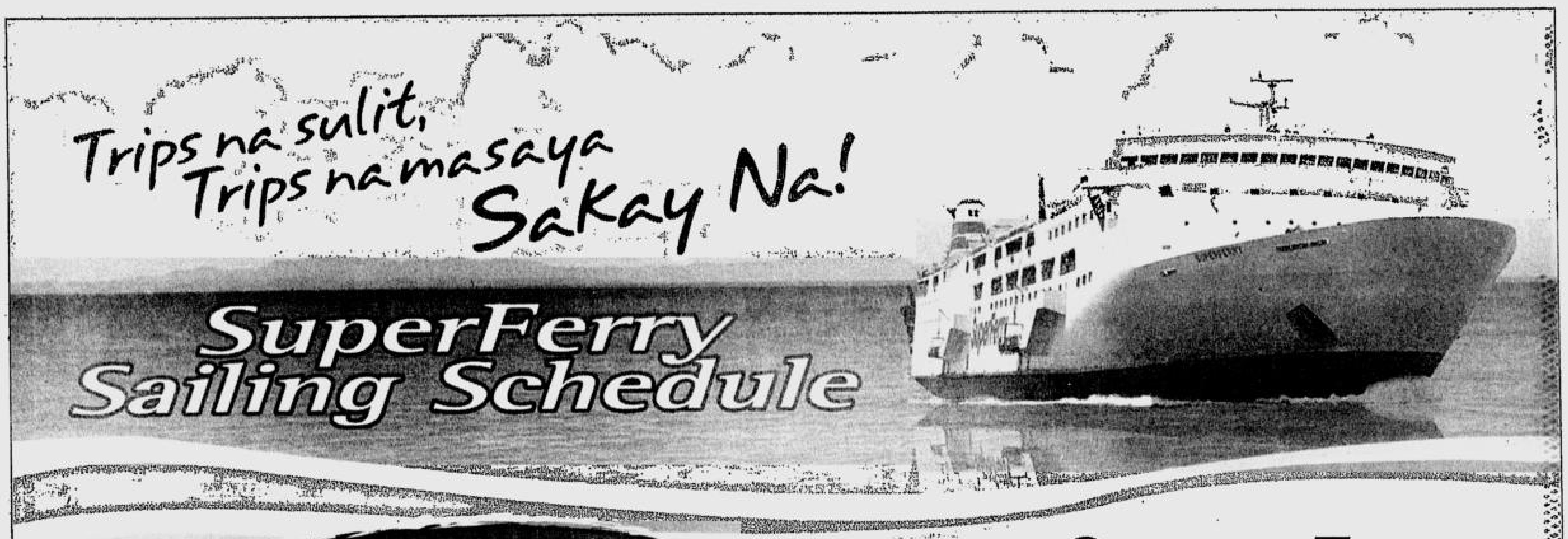

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From MANILA

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
BACOLOD	THU	11:00 pm	SF 14	P4	FRI	6:30 pm	BREDCO
	SUN	9:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	MON	6:00 pm	BREDCO
CAGAYAN de ORO	WED	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	FRI	11:59 am	PUNTOD
	MON	10:00 am	SF 14	P4	TUE	7:30 pm	PUNTOD
	THU	11:00 pm	SF 14	P4	SAT	10:00 am	PUNTOD
CEBU	MON	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	TUE	6:00 pm	CIP
	TUE	3:00 pm	SF 12	P4	WED	11:59 am	CIP
	THU	7:00 pm	SF 12	P4	FRI	4:00 pm	CIP
	SUN	9:00 am	SF 12	P4	MON	6:00 am	CIP
CORON	FRI	4:00 pm	OLOM	P4	SAT	6:00 am	CORON
COTABATO	SAT	10:00 am	SF 2/5/9	P4	MON	5:30 am	POLLOC
DAVAO	MON	2:00 pm	SF 1/8	P14	WED	6:00 pm	SASA
	SAT	10:00 am	SF 1/8	P14	MON	5:00 pm	SASA
DIPOLOG	FRI	11:59 pm	OLOS	P 14	SUN	3:00 pm	DIP
DUMAGUETE	MON	11:59 pm	OLOM	P14	WED	11:00 am	DGTE
	WED	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	FRI	4:00 am	DGTE
DUMAGUIT	MON	2:00 pm	OLOL	P4	TUE	5:30 am	DUM
	WED	2:00 pm	OLOL	P4	THU	5:30 am	DUM
	SAT	2:00 pm	OLOL	P4	SUN	5:30 am	DUM
GEN. SANTOS	MON	2:00 pm	SF 1/8	P14	WED	8:00 am	MAKAR
	SAT	10:00 am	SF 1/8	P14	MON	7:00 am	MAKAR
ILIGAN	THU	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P14	SAT	9:00 am	ILIGAN
	SUN	9:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	TUE	10:00 am	ILIGAN
ILOILO	THU	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P14	FRI	5:00 pm	SNPED
	MON	10:00 am	SF 14	P4	TUE	5:00 am	SNPED
	SAT	10:00 am	SF 1/8	P14	SUN	5:00 am	SNPED
MASBATE	TUE	11:00 pm	OLOS	P 14	WED	6:00 pm	MSBTE
NASIPIT/ BUTUAN	MON	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	WED	11:00 am	NASIPIT
	THU	11:59 pm	SF 1/8	P14	SAT	9:00 am	NASIPIT
OZAMIZ	THU	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P14	SAT	1:00 pm	OZAMIZ
	SUN	9:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	TUE	2:00 pm	OZAMIZ
PALOMPON	TUE	11:00 pm	OLOS	P 14	THU	3:00 am	PALOMPON
P. PRINCESA	FRI	4:00 pm	OLOM	P4	SAT	8:00 pm	PPS
ROXAS	MON	2:00 pm	OLOL	P4	TUE	8:30 am	CULASI
	WED	2:00 pm	OLOL	P4	THU	8:30 am	CULASI
	SAT	2:00 pm	OLOL	P4	SUN	8:30 am	CULASI
SURIGAO	MON	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	P4	WED	4:30 am	SURIGAO
	THU	11:59pm	SF 1/8	P14	SAT	3:00 am	SURIGAO
TAGBILARAN	MON	11:59 pm	OLOM	P14	WED	5:30 am	TAGBI
	FRI	11:59 pm	OLOS	P14	SUN	7:00 am	TAGBI
ZAMBOANGA	MON	2:00 pm	SF 1/8	P14	TUE	6:00 pm	ZAMBO
	SAT	10:00 am	SF 2/5/9	P4	SUN	6:00 pm	ZAMBO

From BACOLOD

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
CAGAYAN	FRI	9:00 pm	SF 14	BREDCO	SAT	10:00 am	PUNTOD
ILIGAN	MON	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	BREDCO	TUE	10:00 am	ILIGAN
OZAMIZ	MON	8:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	BREDCO	TUE	2:00 pm	OZA
MANILA	WED	3:30 pm	SF 14	BREDCO	THU	11:00 am	P4
	SUN	2:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	BREDCO	MON	11:00 am	P4

From CAGAYAN de ORO

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
BACOLOD	TUE	11:59 pm	SF 14	PUNTOD	WED	1:00 pm	BREDCO
DUMAGUETE	FRI	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	PUNTOD	SAT	6:00 am	DGTE
ILOILO	SAT	7:00 pm	SF 14	PUNTOD	SUN	8:00 am	SNPED
MANILA	TUE	11:59 pm	SF 14	PUNTOD	THU	11:00 am	P4
	FRI	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	PUNTOD	SUN	11:00 am	P4
	SAT	7:00 pm	SF 14	PUNTOD	MON	5:00 am	P4

From CEBU

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
NASIPIT	TUE	9:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	CIP	WED	11:00 am	NAS
SURIGAO	TUE	9:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	CIP	WED	4:30 am	SUR
MANILA	MON	11:59 am	SF 12	CIP	TUE	9:00 am	P4
	WED	5:00 pm	SF 12	CIP	THU	2:00 pm	P4
	THU	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	CIP	FRI	6:00 pm	P4
	FRI	8:00 pm	SF 12	CIP	SAT	5:00 pm	P4
	SUN	9:00 am	SF 1/8	CIP	MON	7:00 am	P14

From CORON

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
P. PRINCESA	SAT	7:00 am	OLOM	CORON	SAT	8:00 pm	PPS
MANILA	SUN	11:00 pm	OLOM	CORON	MON	11:59 am	P14

From COTABATO

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
ILOILO	MON	11:59 am	SF 2/5/9	POLLOC	TUE	2:00 pm	SNPED
ZAMBOANGA	MON	11:59 am	SF 2/5/9	POLLOC	MON	8:30 pm	ZAMBO
MANILA	MON	11:59 am	SF 2/5/9	POLLOC	WED	1:00 pm	P4

From DAVAO

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
GEN. SANTOS	MON	11:00 pm	SF 1/8	SASA	TUE	7:00 am	MAKAR
	WED	11:00 pm	SF 1/8	SASA	THU	7:00 am	MAKAR
ILOILO	MON	11:00 pm	SF 1/8	SASA	WED	10:00 am	SNPED
ZAMBOANGA	WED	11:00 pm	SF 1/8	SASA	THU	10:00 pm	ZAMBO
MANILA	MON	11:00 pm	SF 1/8	SASA	THU	7:00 am	P14
	WED	11:00 pm	SF 1/8	SASA	SAT	4:00 am	P14

From DIPOLOG

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
TAGBILARAN	SUN	11.59 pm	OLOS	DIPOLOG	MON	6:00 am	TAGBI
MANILA	SUN	11:59 pm	OLOS	DIPOLOG	TUE	5:00 pm	P14

From DUMAGUETE

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
CAGAYAN	FRI	6:00 am	SF 2/5/9	DGTE	FRI	11:59 am	PUNTOD
TAGBILARAN	WED	5:00 pm	OLOM	DGTE	WED	8:00 pm	TAGBI
MANILA	WED	5:00 pm	OLOM	DGTE	FRI	4:00 am	P4
	SAT	9:00 am	SF 2/5/9	DGTE	SUN	11:00 am	P4

From DUMAGUIT

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
ROXAS	TUE	7:00 am	OLOL	DUM	TUE	8:30 am	CULASI
	THU	7:00 am	OLOL	DUM	THU	8:30 am	CULASI
	SUN	7:00 am	OLOL	DUM	SUN	8:30 am	CULASI
MANILA	TUE	3:30 pm	OLOL	DUM	WED	7:00 am	P4
	THU	3:30 pm	OLOL	DUM	FRI	7:00 am	P4
	SUN	3:30 pm	OLOL	DUM	MON	7:00 am	P4

From GEN. SANTOS

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
DAVAO	MON	9:00 am	SF 1/8	MAKAR	MON	5:00 pm	SASA
	WED	10:00 am	SF 1/8	MAKAR	WED	6:00 pm	SASA
ILOILO	TUE	10:00 am	SF 1/8	MAKAR	WED	10:00 am	SNPED
ZAMBOANGA	THU	10:00 am	SF 1/8	MAKAR	THU	10:00 pm	ZAMBO
MANILA	TUE	10:00 am	SF 1/8	MAKAR	THU	7:00 am	P14
	THU	10:00 am	SF 1/8	MAKAR	SAT	4:00 am	P14

From ILIGAN

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
BACOLOD	SAT	10:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ILIGAN	SUN	11:59 am	BREDCO
OZAMIZ	TUE	11:59 am	SF 2/5/9	ILIGAN	TUE	2:00 pm	OZA
	SAT	11:00 am	SF 2/5/9	ILIGAN	SAT	1:00 pm	OZA
MANILA	TUE	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ILIGAN	THU	5:00 am	P14
	SAT	10 00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ILIGAN	MON	11:00 am	P4

From ILOILO

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
CAGAYAN	TUE	7:00 am	SF 14	SNPED	TUE	7:30 pm	PUNTOD
DAVAO	SUN	7:00 am	SF 1/8	SNPED	MON	5:00 pm	SASA
GEN. SANTOS	SUN	7:00 am	SF 1/8	SNPED	MON	7:00 am	MAKAR
ILIGAN	FRI	7:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	SNPED	SAT	9:00 am	ILI
OZAMIZ	FRI	7:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	SNPED	SAT	1:00 pm	OZA
MANILA	TUE	4:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	SNPED	WED	1:00 pm	P4
	WED	11:59 am	SF 1/8	SNPED	THU	7:00 am	P14
	SUN	10:00 am	SF 14	SNPED	MON	5:00 am	P4

From MASBATE

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
PALOMPON	WED	8:00 pm	OLOS	MASBATE	THU	3:00 am	PALOMPON
MANILA	THU	4:00 pm	OLOS	MASBATE	FRI	11:00 am	P14

From NASIPIT / BUTUAN

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
CEBU	WED	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	NAS	THU	4:00 pm	CIP
	SAT	4:00 pm	SF 1/8	NAS	SUN	6:00 am	CIP
SURIGAO	WED	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	NAS	THU	5:00 am	SUR
	SAT	4:00 pm	SF 1/8	NAS	SAT	8:00 pm	SUR
MANILA	WED	11:59 pm	SF 2/5/9	NAS	FRI	6:00 pm	P4
	SAT	4:00 pm	SF 1/8	NAS	MON	7:00 am	P14

From OZAMIZ

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
BACOLOD	SAT	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	OZA	SUN	11:59 am	BREDCO
ILIGAN	TUE	7:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	OZA	TUE	9:00 pm	ILIGAN
	SAT	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	OZA	SAT	8:00 pm	ILIGAN
MANILA	TUE	7:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	OZA	THU	5:00 am	P14
	SAT	6:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	OZA	MON	11:00 am	P4

From PALOMPON

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
MASBATE	THU	7:00 am	OLOS	PALOMPON	THU	2:00 pm	MASBATE
MANILA	THU	7:00 am	OLOS	PALOMPON	FRI	11:00 am	P14

From PUERTO PRINCESA

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
CORON	SUN	9:00 am	OLOM	Pps	SUN	10:00 pm	CORON
MANILA	SUN	9:00 am	OLOM	Pps	MON	11:59 am	P14

From ROXAS

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
DUMAGUIT	TUE	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	TUE	2:00 pm	DUMAGUIT
	THU	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	THU	2:00 pm	DUMAGUIT
	SUN	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	SUN	2:00 pm	DUMAGUIT
MANILA	TUE	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	WED	7:00 am	P4
	THU	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	FRI	7:00 am	P4
	SUN	12:30 pm	OLOL	CULASI	MON	7:00 am	P4

From SURIGAO

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
CEBU	THU.	9.00 am	SF 2/5/9	SUR	THU	4:00 pm	CIP
	SAT	11:00 pm	SF 1/8	SUR	SUN	6:00 am	CIP
NASIPIT	WED	6:30 am	SF 2/5/9	SUR	WED	11:00 am	NAS
	SAT	5:00 am	SF 1/8	SUR	SAT	9:00 am	NAS
MANILA	THU	9:00 am	SF 2/5/9	SUR	FRI	6:00 pm	P4
	SAT	11:00 pm	SF 1/8	SUR	MON	7:00 am	P14

From TAGBILARAN

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
DIPOLOG	SUN	9.00 am	OLOS	TAGBI	SUN	3:00 pm	DIPOLOG
DUMAGUETE	WED	8:00 am	OLOM	TAGBI	WED	11:00 am	DGTE
MANILA	MON	10:00 am	OLOS	TAGBI	TUE	5:00 pm	P14
	WED	11:00 pm	OLOM	TAGBI	FRI	4:00 am	P4

From ZAMBOANGA

TO	DEPARTURE				ARRIVAL		
	DAY	TIME	VESSEL	PIER	DAY	TIME	PIER
COTABATO	SUN	9:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ZAMBO	MON	5.30 am	POLLOC
DAVAO	TUE	8:00 pm	SF 1/8	ZAMBO	WED	6:00 pm	SASA
GEN. SANTOS	TUE	8:00 pm	SF 1/8	ZAMBO	WED	8:00 am	MAKAR
ILOILO	MON	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ZAMBO	TUE	2:00 pm	SNPED
MANILA	MON	11:00 pm	SF 2/5/9	ZAMBO	WED	1:00 pm	P4
	THU	11:59 pm	SF 1/8	ZAMBO	SAT	4:00 am	P14

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BUSINESS

World Bank sees 4.3% growth for RP in 2003

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE WORLD Bank has estimated that the Philippine economy would grow by 4.3 percent in 2003, an outlook better than the International Monetary Fund's 3.8 percent but still lower compared with the government's target of posting a 5- to 5.5-percent growth in gross domestic product.

The World Bank's outlook for the Philippines was better compared with an estimated growth of 3.2 percent for Indonesia and 4 percent for Thailand but lower than the 5 percent for Malaysia.

This year, the multilateral financial institution is expecting the country to grow by 4 percent or at par with the lower end of the government's target.

The Washington-based lender said in its semi-annual review of the region that while growth had been stronger than expected this year, the challenges for the Philippines and the rest of Southeast Asia would be on how these economies could offset the impact of a global slowdown given the conflict in the Middle East and its fallout on crude oil prices.

The Philippines being a heavy importer of crude oil, the government is already anticipating a higher inflation and possibly a weaker peso in the coming year if the situation in the Middle East deteriorates.

Exports, according to the World Bank, may suffer from a weaker global demand. Already, shipments to the United States and Japan, the country's biggest export markets, have declined.

The World Bank's investment outlook for the Philippines is also not as rosy.

"Going forward, the outlook for fixed investments is uncertain as investment project approvals fell by 50 percent in the first half of 2002," it said it its report.

For its part, the IMF said that the key to improving growth in the Philippines and the rest of Asia is intra-regional trade, a situation that had been reflected in the country's export profile this year.

"Intra-regional trade is key to the growth of Asia," said Charles Adams, IMF assistant director for Asia and the Pacific. Among the regions in the world, Asia was seen to be the strongest performer in 2003, largely on account of robust growth of China.

The IMF official, however, said that Asia could not disregard the performance of the United States as well as the impact of the potential conflict in the Middle East to the region's prospects.

He explained that even as China imports heavily from its neighbors, the final destination of these goods was still the US market.

ADB extends term of $175-M farm program

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ASIAN Development Bank has agreed to extend the term of its $175-million grain sector development program with the Philippine government until December 2003 to provide more leeway in the implementation of needed reforms.

In a press briefing, ADB country director for the Philippines Thomas Crouch said the bank had agreed to stretch the effectivity of the program, which was committed in April 2000 and would have originally expired last June.

The program, which aims to liberalize the pricing and importation of rice and corn as well as to restructure the National Food Authority (NFA), is tied to the implementation of 20 reforms. Of the total amount, the ADB has so far released only $40 million while the remaining tranches have been delayed because some reforms remained incomplete.

For instance, the government earlier deferred a plan to dismantle the rice trading monopoly of the NFA due to uncertainties brought by the forecast recurrence of the El Niño weather phenomenon.

"We have intensified our dialogue on the grain sector because that has been outstanding for quite some time. We are trying to come to a closure on that," Crouch said.

The three outstanding issues being resolved, Crouch said, were:

- The conversion to tariffs of the current quantitative restrictions on rice imports;
- The improvement of the rice buffer stock administration, and
- The restructuring of the NFA and the liberalization of rice importation to allow private sector participation.

"These issues are still under discussions. These are delicate issues and they will take time to resolve," Crouch said.

"I'd like to remind you that this is not an ADB program. This is a government program which we believe in and still believe in," he said.

Since there has been a change in administration since the program was signed, Crouch said the ADB and the government were taking a closer look at the conditions tied to the loan to ensure that the commitments were still relevant.

The abolition of the NFA's monopoly on rice importation, opening up imports to the private sector subject to appropriate tariffs, and the privatization of the NFA's trading functions have been the major policy objectives committed by the Estrada administration, which was, however, overthrown in January 2001.

The Macapagal administration, for its part, has assured its continuing commitment to the grain sector reform program.

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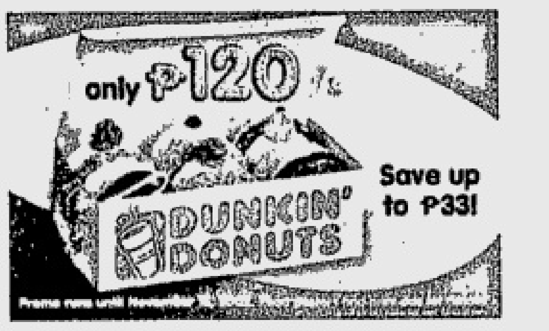
LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

Trend Spotting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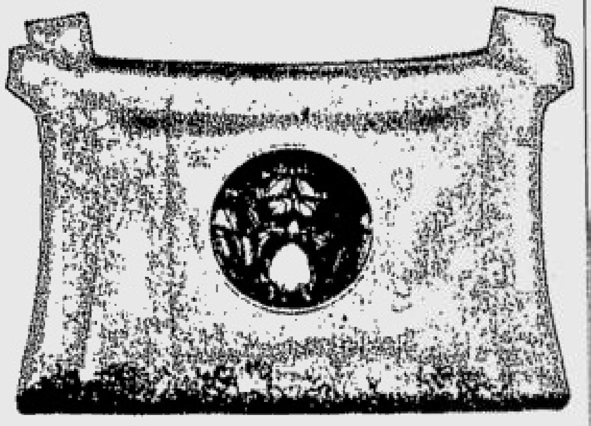

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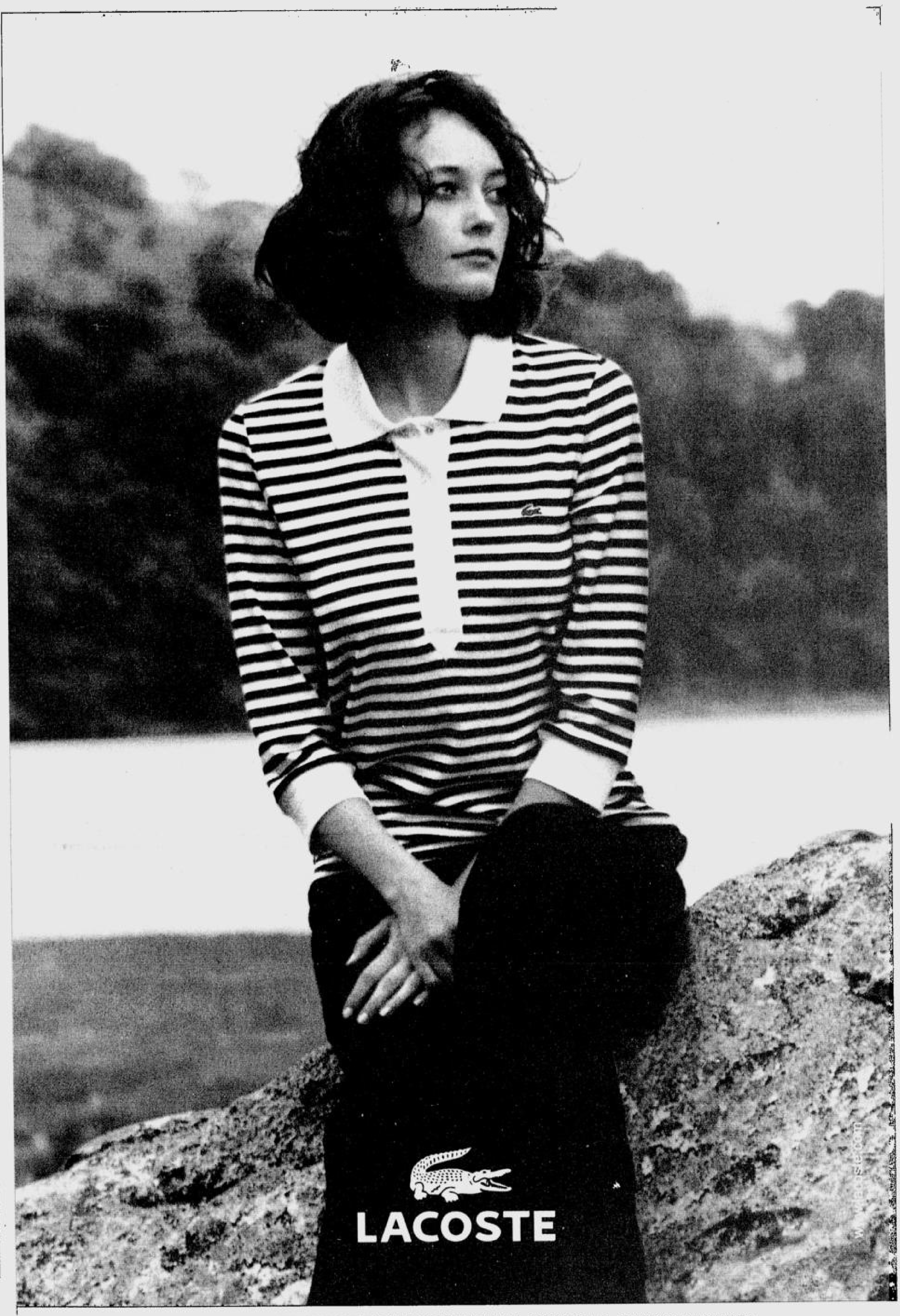
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LAYERING is essential when dressing for winter. You must be able to remove clothes easily as you move indoors.

FASHION ADVICE

A snowy rendezvous, Imeldific aspirations and busy lifestyles

By Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

> *I am younger each year at the first snow. When I see it, suddenly, in the air, all little and white and moving, then I am in love again and very young and I believe everything.*—**Anne Sexton, "A Self-Portrait in Letters"**

I'M meeting my fiancé's parents in New York late next month. I'm just a simple girl and this will be my first trip to the United States. What kind of clothes do I need, cold climate and all?

Meeting your future in-laws is undoubtedly one of the most important events in your life. And your first trip to the US will surely make the occasion doubly thrilling and memorable.

GOOD, warm footwear, like leather boots, is important.

New York is a vital and exciting city, but to enjoy yourself and to avoid discomfort, arm yourself against the unbearably cold winter and the possibility of snow, sleet and rain.

First, you will need a good coat. There are numerous styles to choose from depending on your personality and wardrobe. But since you will probably bring only one, choose a style that is versatile—something easy to dress up or down and can be worn with all your outfits.

It's better to stick to a classic cut in a basic color, such as a straight three-button black coat that is flattering on most body types. Keep in mind that a longer length will cover more hemline options. If you want to add a bit of panache, choose one with a touch of detailing like a fur collar, a belt in a contrasting color or unique buttons.

Fabric is also an important consideration when choosing a coat. Cashmere is very popular but quite pricey. It is also not as resilient and easy to manage as wool. A good compromise would be a wool-cashmere blend. Then there's microfiber, a material that is four times thinner than wool but extremely durable. It can come in different styles, from rugged parkas to refined, reversible pea coats. It doesn't wrinkle easily, which makes it perfect for traveling.

Next, you will need various articles of clothing like jackets, turtlenecks, trousers, skirts and sweaters in winter fabrics—rayon-wool blends, wool, heavy knits, corduroy, cashmere, leather, mohair, tweeds, chenille and suede. Pick pieces in monochromatic colors that you can mix and match so you can create more wardrobe options.

Keep in mind that layering is essential. You must be able to remove layers of clothing easily as you move indoors.

In addition, scarves, stoles, gloves, caps or hats, stockings and even earmuffs are essential to keeping warm. You can use scarves and stoles to wrap around your head or neck when it gets intolerably cold. If you want a fashionable alternative, try wearing ponchos that are quite popular this season.

In case you're still in New York during the holidays, you might want to bring one or two dressy outfits that you can use for Christmas and New Year. It's also safer to pack some thermal underwear like undershirts, leggings or long johns, especially if you feel cold easily.

Finally, don't underestimate the importance of good, warm footwear. Leather boots or pumps are your best bet while leather sneakers are casual and trendy options.

What kinds of shoes should one have in a wardrobe? Can you suggest specific styles and colors please?

Imelda Marcos must have been on the right track. She knew that shoes could make or break an outfit so she had around 3,000 pairs, including a pair with disco lights that probably blinked on and off as she boogied the night away.

But let's get real here. Not all of us will have enough wealth to indulge an insatiable love for footwear. What's a girl to do? It's all quite simple, really.

Have several good quality pairs in numerous styles that you can wear with various outfits and for different occasions. To determine which basic styles you need, you must take your lifestyle (your job, sport, leisure time activities, manner of dressing) into consideration. This way, you don't waste hard-earned money buying shoes that you will hardly use.

Generally speaking, your shoe wardrobe

A SNOWY/ p.C7

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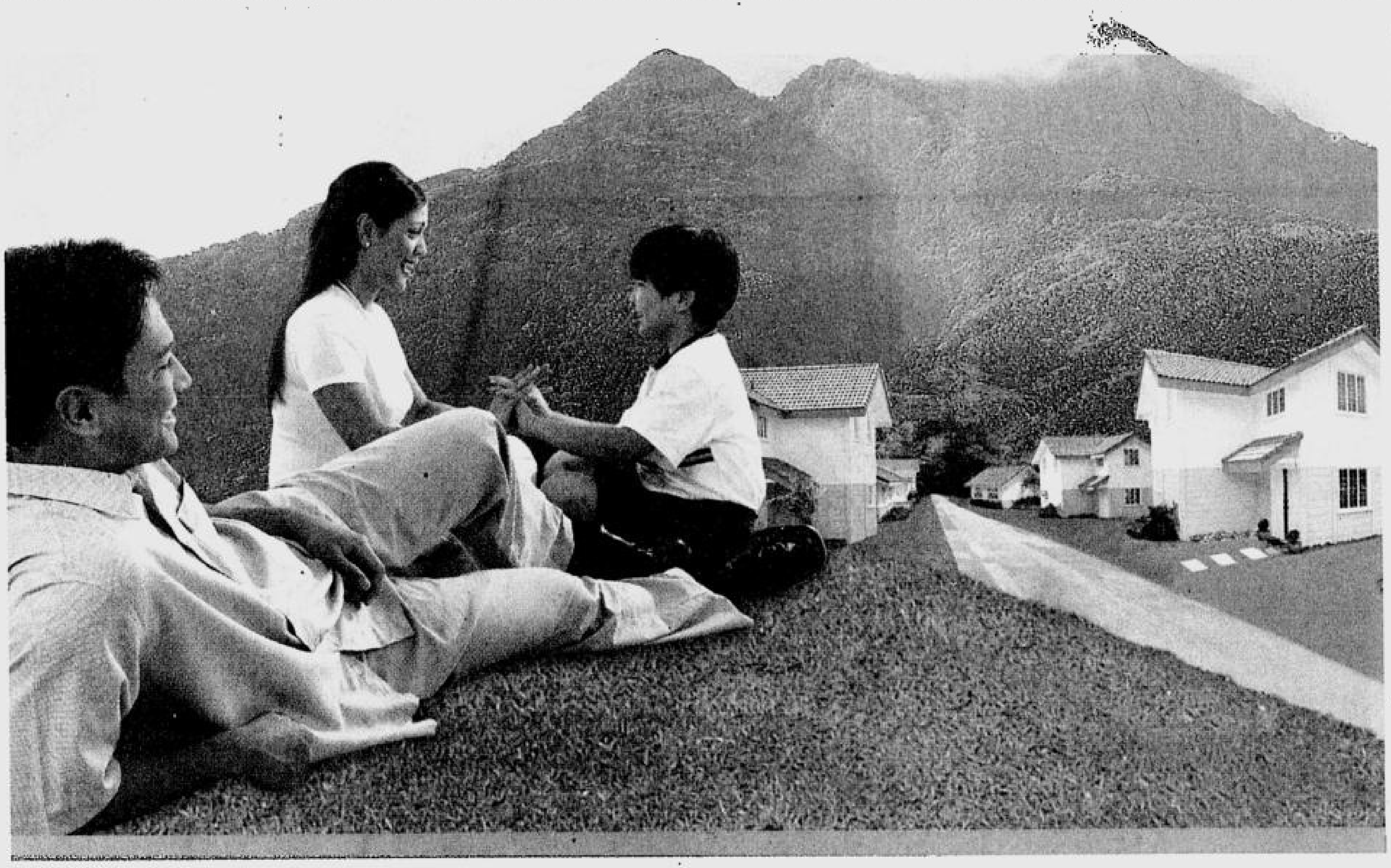

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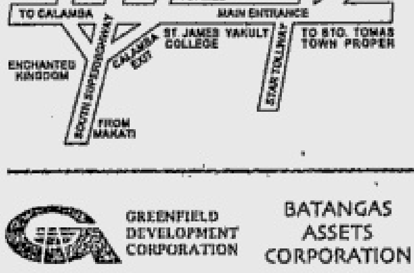

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ANGELO Justin

Stylist launches his makeup line

COLOR to complement the Filipina skin

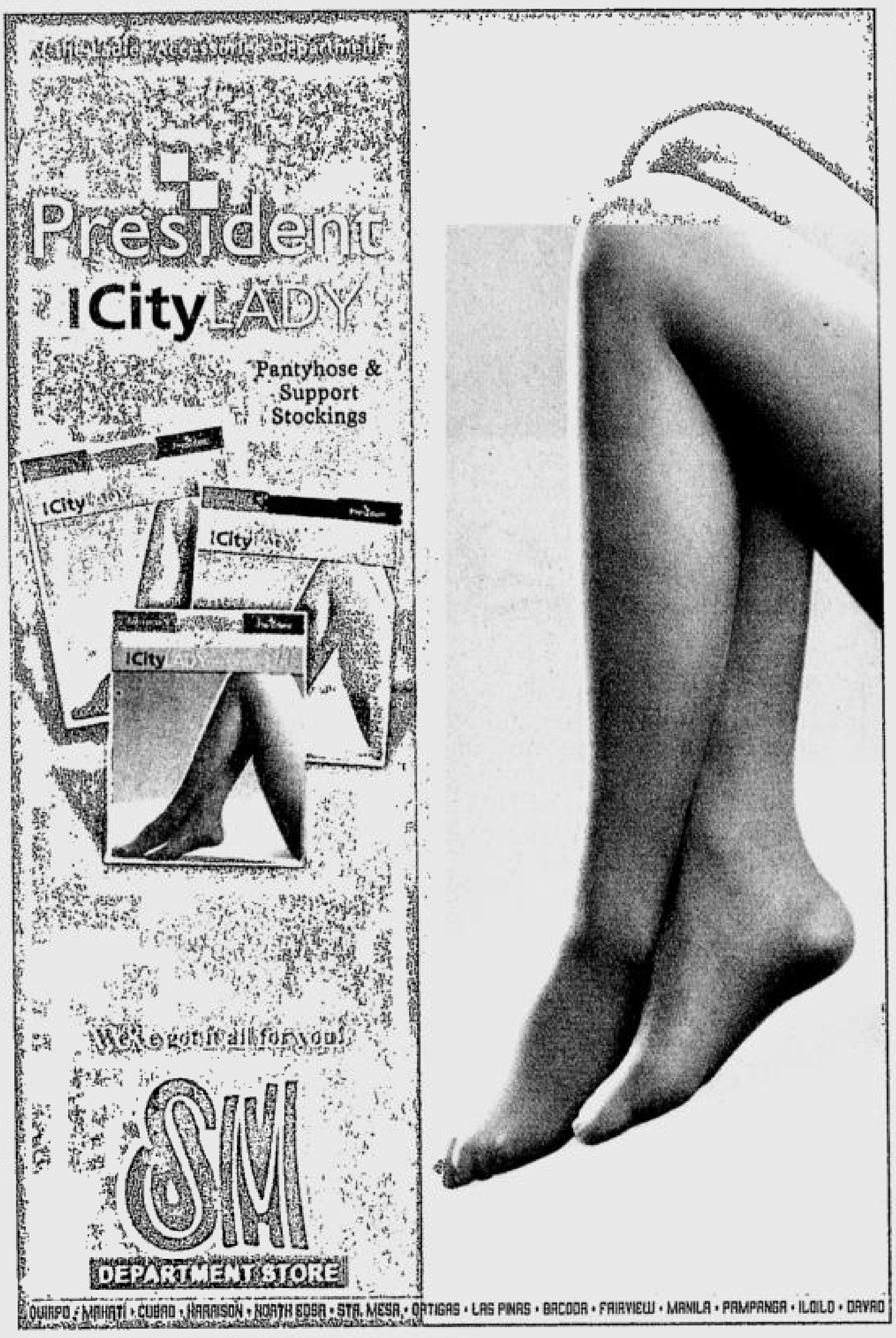
ANGELO Justin, stylist and makeup artist for more than 20 years, is following the footsteps of international makeup artists Bobbi Brown and Mc Voy who both ventured into having their own makeup line.

The Angelo Justin lipstick has four colors—two for day and two lip tones for evening.

A creator of classy colors, Justin hopes to showcase his product on his classy clientele like Imee Marcos, Gretchen Barretto, Ruffa Gutierrez, KC Concepcion, Claudia Bermudez, Ana Nicole Smith, Philippine supermodel Ny Vong and Joan Vitagcol, and broadcasters and TV personalities Ciara Sotto, Trisha Salvador-Ocampo and Marion Pacheco.

The four shades are natural looking with shine and gloss that can be used alone or mixed together for versatility.

Call (0917) 910-4213 and 895-3114.



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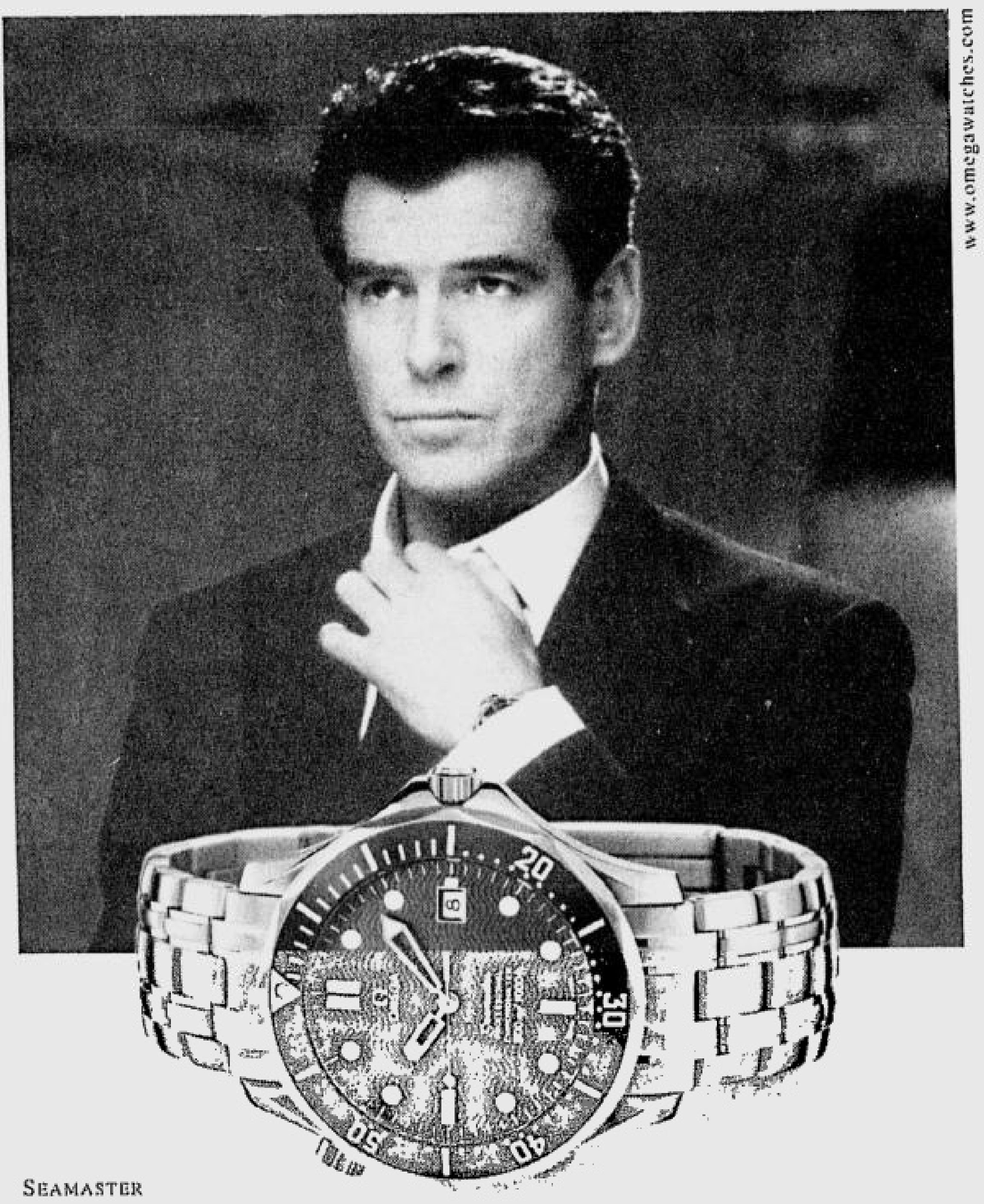

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Promo period is from September 1 to November 15, 2002.

Just text LISTERINE to 242 (Smart) and 2944 (Globe) to know more!

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2.	Bernadith Mercado	cell card
3.	Catherine Delsocorro	Nokia 3310
4.	Chari Tec	cell card
5.	Divina Manansala	Nokia 3310
6.	Emely Esguerra	cell card
7.	Franco Bornasal	cell card
8.	Geraldin Cabanting	M100 Palm Pilot
9.	Jeofrey Rafanan	cell card
10.	Jerome Peralta	Nokia 3310
11.	Kenneth Ong	Nokia 3310
12.	Leilani Almarines	cell card
13.	Luisito Pangandian	cell card
14.	Lyrea Cosio	cell card
15.	Ma. Ailyn Relano	M100 Palm Pilot
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21.	Michael Sy	cell card
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24.	Remedios Asper	cell card
25.	Rey Santiago	Nokia 3310
26.	Ricardo Barabad	Hong Kong travel package
27.	Ricardo Martin, Jr.	cell card
28.	Richard Clemente	cell card
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31.	Sylvia Astejada	cell card
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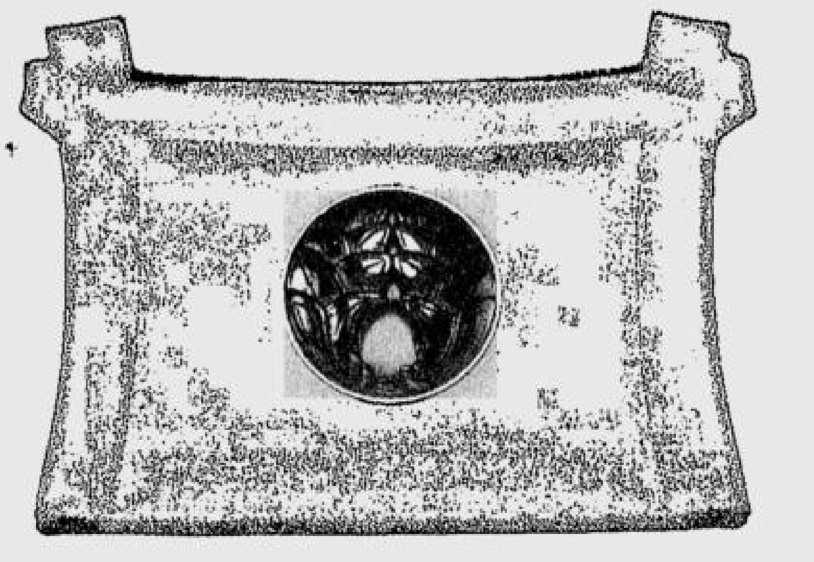
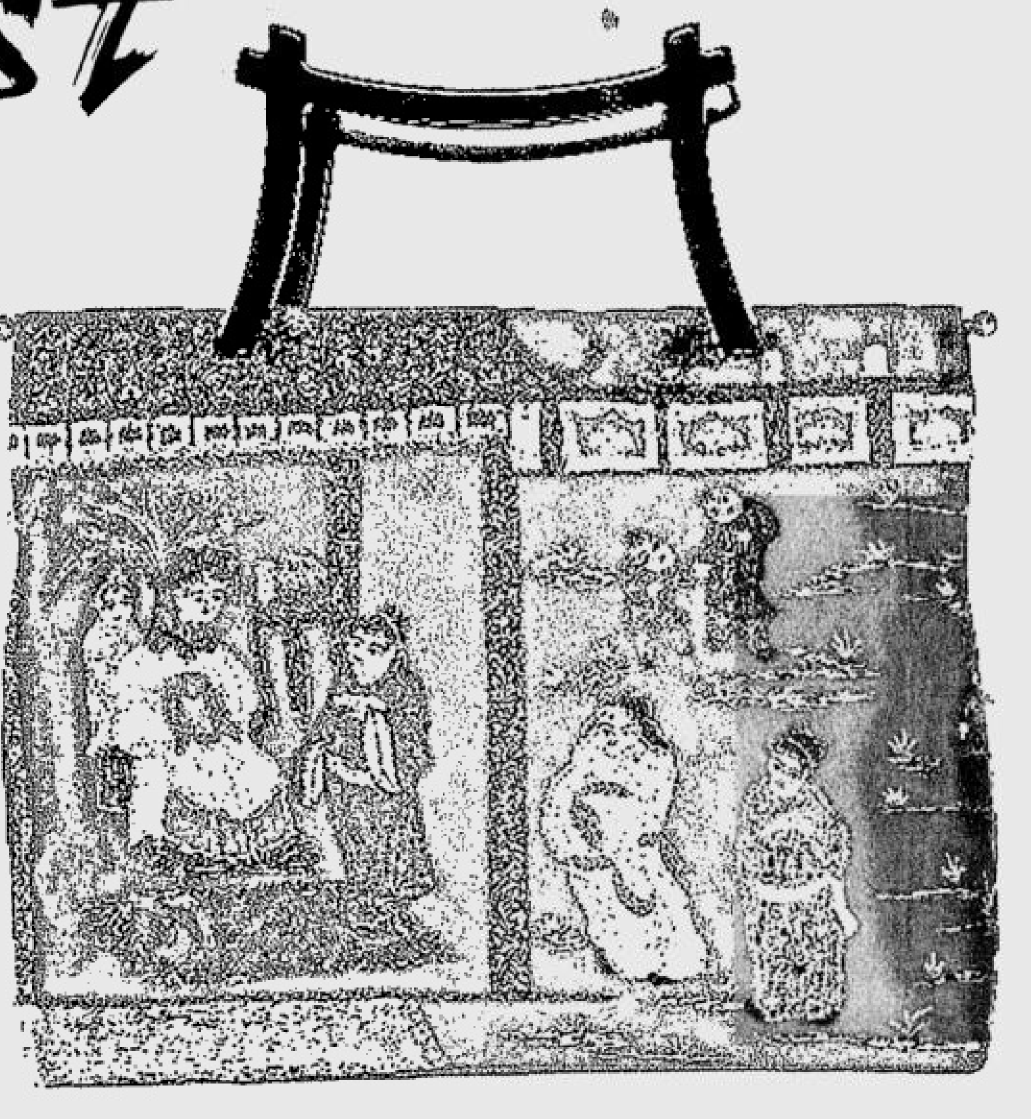


Inspired by the East



NATORI'S Premiere collection of day and evening bags for the Fall fashion season of 2002 rides the Orient Express as the world-renowned label, famous for its innerwear, premiers in Manila this month via the chic lifestyle store Wish.

Josie Natori is flying in specifically for the invitational launch on Nov. 11.

Natori left no semiprecious stone unturned to come up with an exquisite collection of drawstrings, hobos, satchels and totes constructed with the use of only the finest leathers, skins and suedes perfect for day and evening. The evening bags are abundant and remain as extraordinary as before—small wonder that even New York "It" girl Renee Rockefeller was seen clutching a Natori clutch in Vogue a few months ago.

Materials in this broad collection range from alligator, strakan and nappa to suede, pig skin, satin and the distinctive Natori obi. Rich details are found throughout the collection, and include exotic embroideries, fringes, signature handle shapes, mink trims, jade and amethyst accents, and incredible beadwork—all continuing hallmarks of Natori.

The Natori line of bags is available exclusively at Wish, G/F Makati Shangri-La Shopping Arcade, Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Flood of cosmetic discounts and freebies

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

DISCOUNTED beauty products will flood stores this month as cosmetic companies offer major discounts and freebies to help buyers save enough money for Christmas gifts and still afford to pamper themselves.

Avon—Anew Pure 0_2 SPF15, whose original price is P899, will cost only P629.30. Designed for those 25 years old and above who are abused by cigarette smoke, pollution and free radicals, the cream counteracts damage caused by lifestyle and environmental stresses. It offers multiple benefits for all skin types, even oily and sensitive ones, because everyone benefits from 0_2 (oxygen) and SPF 15. Skin that lacks oxygen is dull, uneven in color and gets dehydrated (yes, even the oily ones, resulting in taut skin with zits). The cream should be used every morning as the final step before applying foundation and before bedtime to aid skin regeneration by helping tired skin cells breathe.

Avon believes that the earlier we moisturize and replenish lost moisture, the more we delay the aging process and reverse the damage.

Tip: Apply to face and neck. Very little goes a long way, so just apply enough to thinly cover these areas. Icing application is wasteful. For questions, call the Avon hotline at 864-2900.

Visit Rustan's Essences at Alabang or Makati and check out:

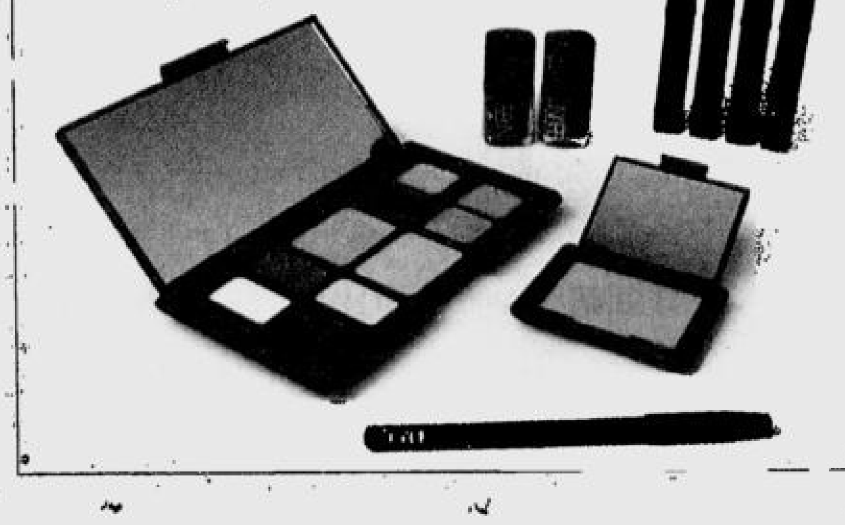
NARS—Their Holiday 2002 collection revolves around Last Dance II, a limited edition Artist palette with four eye shadows: Himalayas (opal white/pink), Night Bird (gray pink with glitter), Night Fever (black with red shimmer) and Night Star (peach with gold glitter). It also has a sheer silver pearl multiple called Copacabana to highlight cheeks and any part of the face and the body. There are lip colors, from a semi-matte eggplant shade dubbed Time Square, to Galaxy girl, a baby doll pink, to sheer silver called 2001. The blush "Orgasm" is the best-seller and a favorite of Allure readers. It is a peachy pink shade with slight shimmer that is suitable for every skin tone and has the effect of a healthy flush. Outside the palette, other favorites include the Exhibit A blush (brilliant red), which is applied according to skin color and gives the user a glow from within.

For those who love gloss, there are four shades to choose from in the Lip Stain Glosses, which are richer in texture and pigment than regular gloss: Daredevil (rich red), Chandernagor (wine), Victoire (deep brown) and Sayonara (pure, pretty pink).

Super Promo—For every P3,500 purchase of Nars, you get to choose a free gift: Choice A, "Area" Glitter pencil-black with gold glitters (P1,550); Choice B, "Scandal" lip gloss-sheer red (P1,350); and Choice C Morocco Refiner (P1,150) their version of MAC's "Spice."

T. Le Clerc—for every purchase of P3, 000 you get an elegant silver gray Le Clerc watch with a snakeskin gray leather straps and silver gray metal face. Tip: The brand is famous for its Banane loose and pressed powder and creamy lipsticks in elegant silver or gold packaging.

Laura Mercier—for every P3,000 purchase, you get a "Flawless Face with makeup lips" video tape for free. In a survey of In Style magazine, at least four items have been named favorites by readers and makeup artists: The secret camouflage concealer and brush, lipsticks in "M" or the Madonna shade, Healthy lips (voted most versatile lip color) and Just lips (best natural shade).



Diego della Palma—For every P1,500 purchase, you get a free instructional video tape on makeup tips. Lipsticks cost below P400; foundation and powders, below P700. The brand may not be well known but the quality of the product is good. Color choices are a bit limited, but check them out. You may find something you've always been looking for.

Paula Dorf—for a P3,500 purchase, you get a gift set containing Haze eye shadow (a shimmer plum shade Oprah uses), beach lipstick (nude brown) and a sampler face bath. Among the favorites are the Perfect Glo Foundation (P2,400) and Paradise lipstick (nude pink beige, P975). The liquid foundations are light, sheer and oil free.

'Sex'-inspired

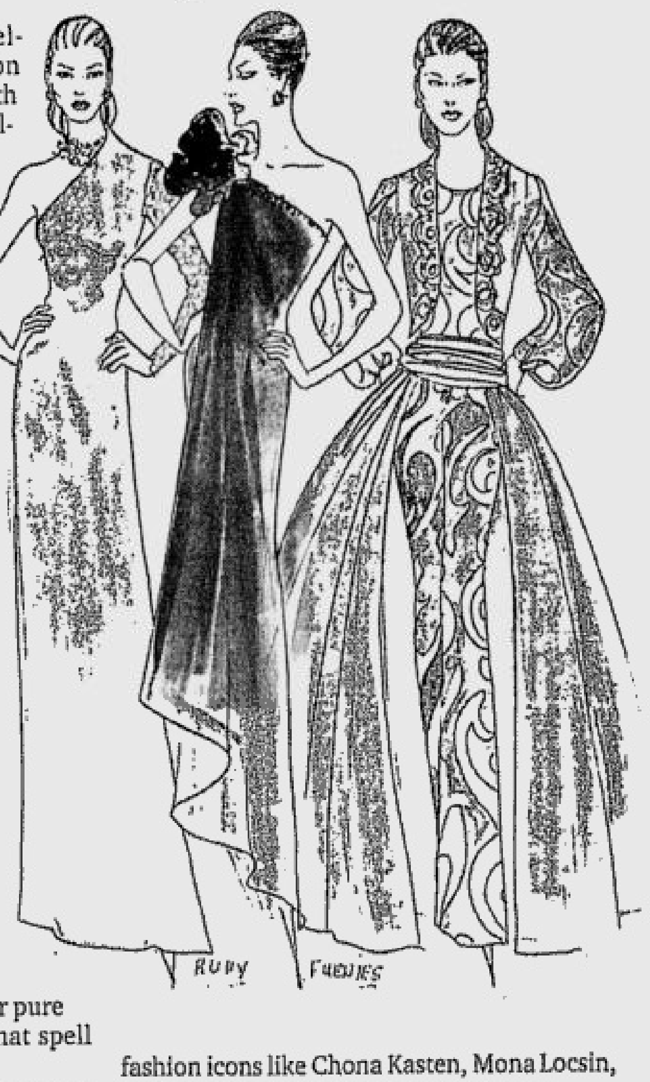
Rustan's Department Store has launched this month Estee Lauder Pleasures Intense. No special promo or introductory price is offered, but the new line is designed for the formal occasions this coming holiday season. Inspired by the "Sex and the City" cast, the scent is meant to appeal to the different sexy personalities: trendy and quirky Carrie, elegant old-rich Charlotte, sex goddess Samantha and classic no-nonsense Miranda.

There was a display of brilliant bouquet of rare and fragrant blooms like Madagascar Jasmine, Le Charme Peony and Tiger Lilly, finished with underpinnings of spice and wood: 30 ml for P2,000, 50 ml for P2,700, and 100 ml for P3,900.

The perfume line is definitely meant for women in their 20s and above, for only they have the degree of sophistication this scent calls for. The younger women may seem trying-hard. The body chemistry is a great factor to consider. Spray on the tester and walk around till you hit the middle or bottom note. Then ask an honest pal how it smells on you.

For any questions or products you want to road-test, write to Makeover 911, PDI Lifestyle or fax to 897-4805

QC fashion designers pay homage to Rudy Fuentes



QUEZON City fashion designers celebrate 40 years of fashion innovation and raise funds for a worthy cause with "Año... Anyo 2003" at the Fiesta Pavilion of the Manila Hotel on Nov. 13.

The show will honor the city's master couturier Rudy Fuentes, who is marking his ruby anniversary in the fashion industry. It will feature Frederick Alba, Toby Albrando, Eddie Baddeo, Rollie Graza, Eric Pineda and Fanny Serrano.

Proceeds of the show will go to High Hopes Foundation, spearheaded by QC Councilor Wilma Amoranto-Sarino, to assist underprivileged families in the city's first district, and to Fuentes' favorite charity.

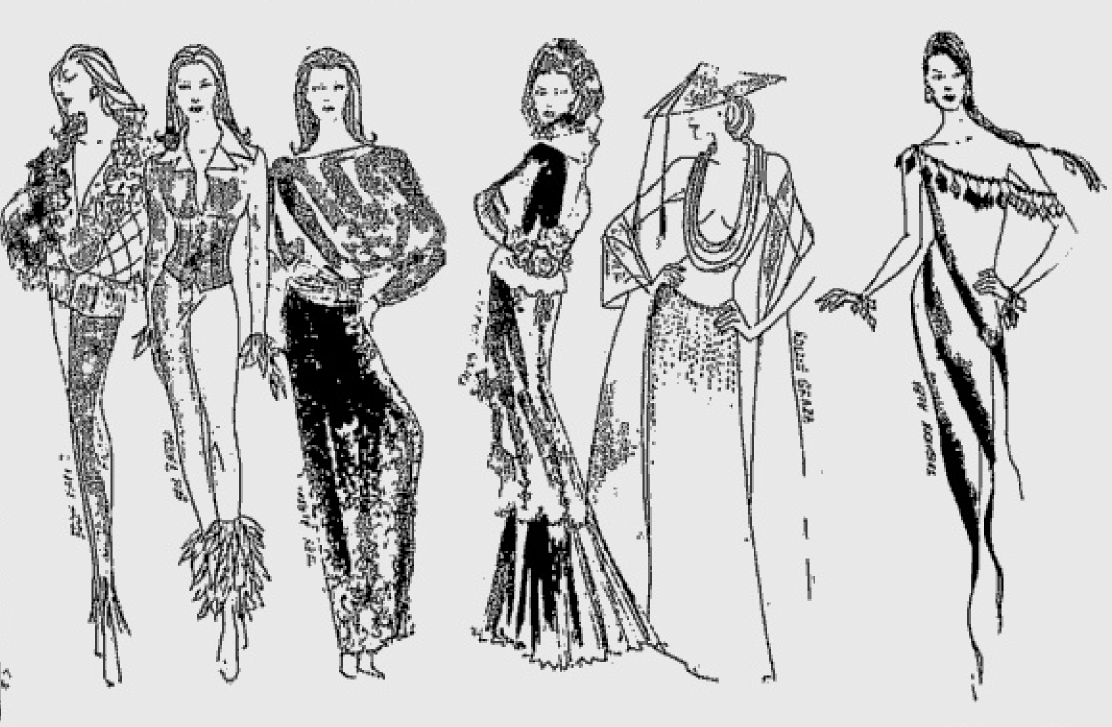
In the show, Baddeo will turn denim into high-style ballgowns using beadworks and brooches. Pineda dyes, washes, frays and rushes the fabric to "distress" it, and uses Swarovski crystals and a profusion of "stitchings."

For Alba, Graza and Serrano, it will be a case of "East meets West," with the designers reworking indigenous Filipino fabrics and accessories to give them a more global, cosmopolitan look.

Albrando and Fuentes are going for pure Hollywood drama, with creations that spell high-style glamour.

The master couturier unveils a 40-piece collection in three parts: Red Classics, showcasing his mastery of draping in ruby shade of crepe, jersey and Shantung silk; Peasant Fantasies in luminous acid colors; and The Retro Collection, his memorable designs for past fashion icons like Chona Kasten, Mona Locsin, Pinky Amabuyok and Melanie Marquez.

"Año... Anyo 2003" will be directed by Raymond Villanueva, with stylist and fashion writer Zardo Austria as event consultant. Cocktails will be served at 6 p.m, show time is at 8 p.m. Call 740-0871/74.



Edgar Allan and the art of draping

EDGAR Allan and business partner, Rene Tiongco, are presenting a dinner and fashion show to celebrate the 20th year of their boutique and couture salon on Nov.12 at the Grand Ballroom of Hotel Inter-Continental in Ayala Avenue, Makati City.

Allan and Tiongco opened their first shop at the Atrium of Makati 20 years ago with society matron Chito Madrigal Collantes and legendary fashion icons Chona Kasten and Elvira Manahan as special guests. A year later, they opened a branch at the Angela Arcade of the Ayala Center. Their shop is now located at the Glorietta 1.

The fashion show will showcase Allan's mastery of the art of draping, although the pieces of show will have a decidedly contemporary look. It will be capped by a parade of bridal gowns, Allan's forte.

Having taken up photography, Allan himself took pictures of gowns from his fashion show collection for publicity materials.

The Edgar Allan boutique carries a limited line of special occasion clothes as well as the designer's bridal creations. Tiongco is a New York-educated fashion merchandiser who handles the business side of the ready-to-wear shop.

EDGAR Allan (left) and Rene Tiongco (right)

Airline unveils new amenity kits

PHILIPPINE Airlines unveils this month a new line of amenity kits for First and Mabuhay (Business) Classes in all its long-haul flights.

The new kits, with the theme "Relax, Revive, Refresh!", address the needs of the long-haul traveller at every stage of the journey.

Each First and Mabuhay Class passenger gets a stylish clutch bag containing more than the usual travel essentials. The new kit has the Aroma line of skincare treatments by Lancôme, a set of aromatherapy formulas to banish travel-related stress and promote constant skin hydration during the flight.

It also includes a wooden massager.

Other grooming items in the kit are hairbrush and comb, dental set (toothbrush and toothpaste) from Colgate, lip moisturizer by Neutrogena and razor kit consisting of a Gillete razor and Caire shave cream. Standard sleeping necessities like slumber mask and slipper socks are also included as well as ear plugs.

The new amenity kits are part of Philippine Airlines' breakthrough Tranquil Traveler program for passengers, designed to promote a healthy, comfortable trip.

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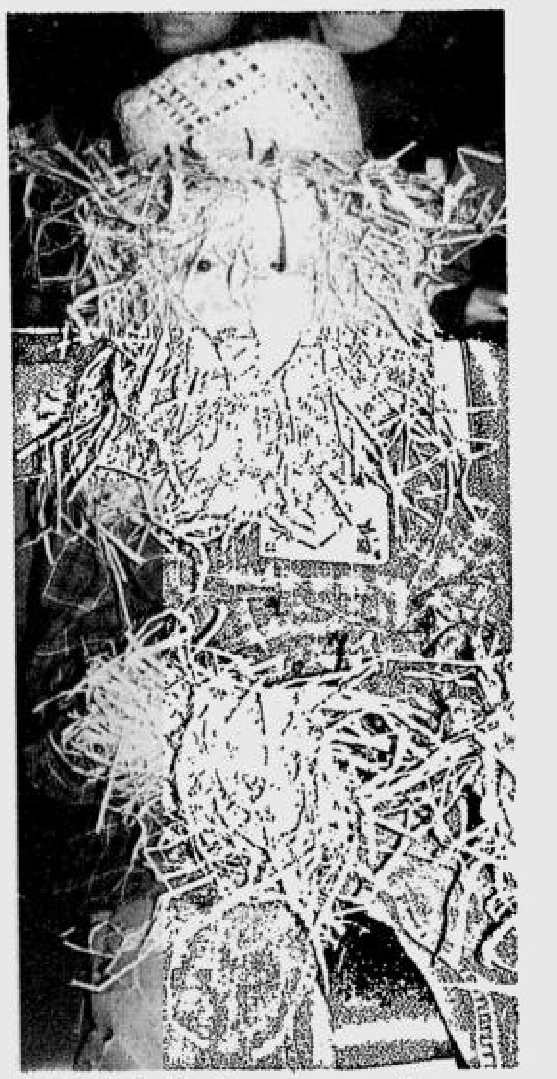


JUAN Carlo the Scarecrow was the unanimous choice for Best Original Costume.

Tricks and treats for young scarecrows, hags and heroes

"COUNT" Troy Montero awards Steph the Space Princess.

KIDS all dressed up in their best Halloween costumes got tricks and treats galore courtesy of Gift Gate at Tavern on the Square in Greenbelt 3. With the venue crawling with cobwebs, spiders and bats, everyone was set to have a blast.

Kids feasted on burgers and pizza arranged as a face-on. Now that's what you call food with a smile! They were mesmerized by a magic act, complete with fire, doves and confetti appearing out of nowhere. Expectant ears waited to hear the pop that never came as a giant needle was poked into a balloon.

CELEBRITY judge China Cojuangco with Kirsten the Witch

The magic of simple soap and water danced on stage as bubbles of all shapes and sizes appeared to the kids' delight. No objections were heard as kids were asked to volunteer to be inside a giant bubble. With the skill and craft of the face painter, everyone looked their colorful best. And, for once, tattoos were not taboo, whether on the cheeks, necks or arms, as long as it was a tattoo of their fave Sanrio character. Imagination ran wild as the balloons were twisted into dog, rabbit or even jester's hat.

Not to be outdone by the guests' outfits, Swatch models Troy Montero and Sarah Meier greeted the audience with a Halloween ensemble of their own. Adding a touch of color to her witch costume, Swatch babe Sarah donned butterfly wings that made her seem to fly. And even with fangs, a cape and a drop of blood masterfully done by ace makeup artist Patrick Rosas, Swatch hunk Troy was still the best-looking Dracula in town.

A grand costume parade led by "Count" Troy and "Butterfly Witch" Sarah delighted everyone at Greenbelt that Halloween afternoon. Harlequins, fairies, scarecrows, superheroes and all the cutest witches in town paraded in their best costumes for judging.

And what's a Halloween party without the treats? Loot bags filled with surprises from Sanrio, Lego and Russ became more exciting with a bonus Gift Gate gift check for the kids. Shopping at Gift Gate has never been so much fun!

The highlight came with the awarding of the best costumes. Choosing the winners wasn't easy for judges China Cojuangco, Tavern's Girlie Rodis and Gift Gate Group's Sheila Ramos. Special awards were given to Leo the Dalmatian for being the Cutest Pup and Ina and Carla as Fairy Princesses got the vote for the Flik Flak Award. The funniest costume went to Pamela the Jester, most original, to Juan Carlo the Scarecrow and the three best Halloween costumes were Kirsten the Witch, Joshua the Panther and Steph the Space Princess.

Each winner also went home with a Swatch Halloween Special watch—Witch Party.

GIANT BUBBLE. Fun with soap and water for a young race driver.

HEAVEN OR HELL? What you see on this page will never justify the fun and magic of Halloween 2002.

When heaven and hell broke loose

YAPARAZZI

Tim Yap

SUPERSTAR **DJ Seb Fontaine** might have backed out at the last minute, and Miss Moneypenny's might have gone broke, but there was just no stopping the Pinoy urbanite's party spirit to soar to different heights and mights. Halloween 2002 exploded with a flurry of events that gave the scene an unexpected jolt of costumed revelry, from glam to ghoulish, ghetto to garish.

"I'm amazed at the high level of energy this year—all the parties were so full, and everyone in all the parties were in costume!" observed scene icon **Atom Henares**, as he hopped from one event to another. Yes, gone are the days when people were corny and didn't don the dress code. From the kids who were at Swatch's Tavern on the Square party to the GenTxters at the Greenbelt Park, one thing was sure—people were more than in the mood for Halloween fun.

It was just in the air—so palpable was its verve that, upon entry to any of the night's parties, aside from the visual and auditory feasts, one would just feel one's hips swaying, grooving to the All Hallow's Eve beat. Talking of visuals, the presence of **Tessa Prieto-Valdes** hovered. "I'm not going to join the costume contest—Tessa is going to win it anyway," I overheard a socialite (such an '80s term) tell her friends (they were in costume nonetheless).

"The coast is clear," said **Chito Vijandre**, one of the judges for the Garden of Eden—The Grand Ayala Halloween Costume Ball at the Green Lounge (a.k.a. the Greenbelt Park), a joint effort of the Ayala Center and Globe GenTxt.

POWER MEN. Mark Reyes, Geoff Rodriguez and Paolo Paraiso

GREEN LOUNGE hostess Shannen Torres

Mystical, magical park

Giant mushrooms adorned the mystical park as feathered fairies, alluring angels, leather-clad demons and other mythical creatures filled the venue, simulating "A Midsummer-Night's-Dream-meets-Mario-Brothers" world, as interpreted by design master **Jun Jun Ablaza**. At its periphery were tents set up by Greenbelt tenants that boasted of Green Lounge home settings, from a Firma opium bed, a PineApple lounge, Kish hemo beds, **Claude Tayag**'s About Design furniture, to a restful Bianca Luna set up and Soumak rope pillows. "It was "chill-ing" to say the least," said **Cathy Bengzon**, who played the Green Lounge godmother.

The frisky frolicking began as DJ **Edge Pamute** of BBC started his set. Latin Canteen partner **Mike Constantino** upped the tempo in his own soulful way. The hypnotic hymns of **Mon Maramba** and the Mystical Musical Merchants followed, and the act became the pied piper of the night, casting a spell among the Gen-txters, who came as glamorous ghouls and goblins at the Greenbelt Park.

At the party's peak—the costume contest, with judges, led by ageless scene icon **Maurice Arcache**, Ayala Land's **Winnie Nazareth**, Chito Vijandre of Firma and **Rhett Eala** of Wink were gathered in the front center of the arena to witness the spectacle. Then, the parade began. One by one—scary, saucy, seductive and surreal, the costumed contestants flaunted their haunted wares in front of an equally fabulously attired audience.

A giant TV, Nokia 7650 from Globe, Technomarine watch, a Carbon bag, a Firma lamp, Shu Uemura and Prima Linea gift certificates were given away to the winners. **Shannen Torres** played the garden's Eve to the hilt, giving a blow-by-blow account of the revelry. Adam was visibly pleased, as he took a bite of the green apple that was given away that night.

Authentic awards

Some folks did the easy route of the princess costume with the ubiquitous tiara or matrix with the overused shades (enough already), while others preferred the devilish garb or straight out of the shower complete with bathrobe and slippers look. Other common sights were United Nations delegates in their respective national costumes. The more adventurous went for all-out production numbers, including the winners—an alien, a vintage kimono-clad angel with inflatable wings, a gypsy, a grave-digging corpse and a centaur from hell.

Most unique for me were the "runaway bride with bridesmaids" group of **Patricia Javier** of Ayala, who arrived in a wedding gown and an entourage clad in cross-trainers; as with **Mich Dulce** who came as Rainbow Brite complete with a whole head of yellow yarn. **Ingrid Go** came as **Imelda Marcos**, with a vintage gown from **Joe Salazar** (it had an especially made label), straight from the Imeldific's closet! Now how authentic can you get?

The costumed revelry reached a second peak when, after the contest, DJ **Steve Mills** took his turn on the table, spinning his sophisticated R&B fare to the delight of the partyphiles that were packed within the confines of the magical park.

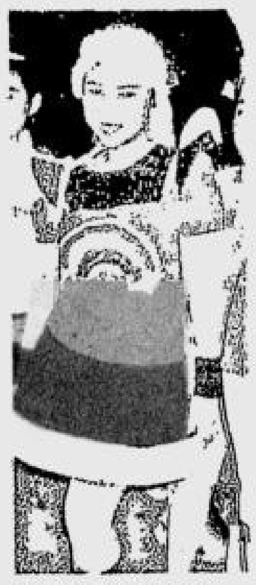
After going the rounds of the whole evening-till-morning Halloween haunts galore, I realize that the harder the times are, the more critical the situation that the world is in, the harder people want to party out and have fun. Whether as escape, amusement or just the state of their being, it keeps the scene alive and our sanity intact. As one friend sent me through text, "As we remember our dear departed ones, we must bear in mind that life is too short to be boring. Live it well, love it good! Make your life one big party. Cheers!"

HALLOWEEN Ball judges Rhett Eala, Maurice Arcache, Chito Vijandre and Winnie Nazareth

RUNAWAY BRIDES. Ayala's Patti Javier, Trixie Zaide, Joy Lee and Donna Pacho

MOULIN Rouged Dara David

IMELDIFIC. Ingrid Go in Joe Salazar



COLOR TROPHY. Mich Dulce as Rainbow Brite

GLOBAL PARTY. Buda Concio and Em Lingao

GOLDEN TREAT. The author with Sarah Meier

A snowy rendezvous, Imeldific aspirations and busy lifestyles

From page C2

should consist of classic, versatile styles with simple and feminine lines. You will need a reliable pair of functional sneakers, preferably white canvas if you can't afford to have more than one pair, which you can wear for relaxed, laid-back days. Then, depending on your sport or athletic activity, you will need athletic shoes or trainers. If you can't decide which trainers to purchase, there are cross-trainers available in the market that you can use for different activities.

Next, purchase a sturdy pair of loafers that you can wear anytime, anywhere. If you would do some traveling, boots are necessary for weather-protection and warmth. Knee-length boots can be worn with skirts and certain styles of pants, but if your cold-weather wardrobe consists mostly of trousers, you can stick to ankle- or midcalf-length versions.

Sandals are also shoe wardrobe basics. Think flat for casual and resort wear, and strappy, high-heeled ones for night. Look for flattering details that will make your feet look sexy and feminine. You will also need comfortable flats that provide sweet relief from extra-high heels.

SCARVES, stoles, gloves, etc. are needed to keep warm.

Dependable day pumps made of good quality leather are a necessity for work. And sleek and glamorous evening pumps are a must for special occasions.

Again, choose your colors and designs according to your personal style and wardrobe. Basic colors like black and brown are easiest to match. Other colors like red or aubergine are interesting and fashionable choices, as long as they suit your personality.

I have really busy days. My clothes should be good for day wear and for dinner or drinks with clients: What are the basics that I should have?

Your fail-safe uniform for day should be a well-tailored and sensible suit (a jacket with matching skirt and pants). Keep your skirt at a conservative knee-length and use only neutral colors that are acceptable in the corporate environment and easy to dress up for cocktails and dinners with clients. A crisp white shirt will make your suit look even more professional.

For your evening look, simply remove your shirt, button up the jacket and wear a strand of pearls. Another option would be to wear a sexy camisole underneath the jacket.

FABRIC is an important consideration in choosing winter clothes.

You can also remove the jacket and shirt and don a top in a luxurious, dressy fabric with shine, sparkle or beading. You can match this with strappy heels or stiletto pumps. It will also help to use a small evening bag instead of your practical tote.

Another alternative would be to wear a basic black dress that can easily take you from the office to any tony restaurant.

Or, why not don a spaghetti-strapped or bustier dress underneath a matching jacket during the day? At night, simply remove the jacket and accessorize your dress with high-heeled sandals, an evening bag and dramatic jewelry like a bold cuff or a necklace of semiprecious stones.

The key to day-into-night dressing is choosing fabrics that are neither day nor evening-specific. Use light wools, wool crepes, silk and synthetic blends.

Meanwhile, do away with linens and cottons that are obviously for day, and satin, chiffon, velvet, lamé and lace that are normally used for evening affairs.

Makeup also plays an important role in creating a totally different look. The simplest way to transform your subdued office face is to wear red lipstick in a shade that flatters your skin tone. Dab on a little perfume and you're ready to go!

E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com

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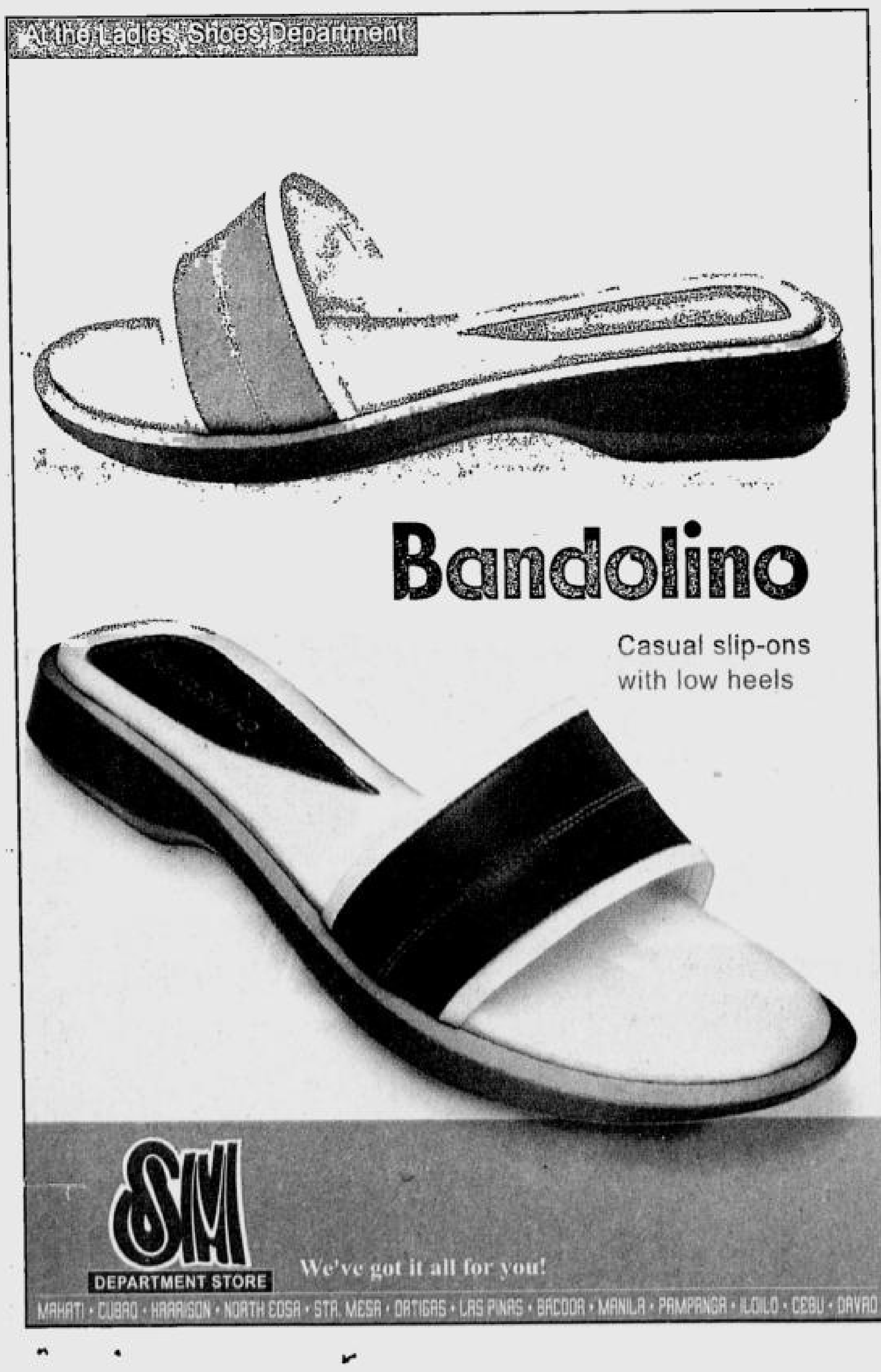
At the Ladies' Shoes Department



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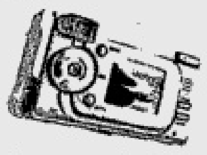

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It's curtains for haute couture house

PARIS—The workshops at Yves Saint Laurent Haute Couture closed their doors for the last time on Oct. 24, bringing an end to a fashion era begun in 1961 by the French designer and his partner Pierre Berge.

The last item to come off the production line was a black wool jacket with gold embroidery, an updated version of a design that first premiered on the catwalk as part of Saint Laurent's autumn/winter 1985-86 collection.

The jacket, part of a swan-song retrospective collection presented by the venerable French house in January, will hang in the closet of Saint Laurent's close friend and muse, actress Catherine Deneuve. It will bear the number 77,751 as the 77,751st product made by the house's workshops.

Retired

Since Saint Laurent announced his retirement at an emotionally charged press conference on Jan. 7, signaling the closure of the couture house, orders have poured in, keeping the house's 158 employees more than busy. But their financial fate is still up in the air.

French luxury goods magnate Francois Pinault announced in March he sold the couture house, owned by his personal holding company Artemis, to the Patrice Bouygues luxury ready-to-wear group, SPLB Prestige Services, for one euro.

But the deal fell through in June when employees cried foul.

Saint Laurent and Berge then decided in late July to buy back the house, also for one symbolic euro, putting in place a compensation package linked to its closure, estimated at 18.4 million euros (US$18.1 million).

YVES Saint Laurent with model

Artemis, which would have preferred a takeover plan rather than closure, poured 14 million euros into the closure budget. The famed designer and Berge will make up the difference.

Saint Laurent's decision to retire did not come entirely as a surprise to insiders in the fashion world. Nor had anyone expected the couture house to go on without him.

He gave up rights to the YSL brand in 1999, when he sold his company to Pinault's Gucci, which now markets Yves Saint Laurent ready-to-wear and accessories and put American designer Tom Ford in creative control.

But the revered French designer retained control of the losing haute couture operation.

Despite its impending closure, Saint Laurent intends to continue coming to the plush headquarters on the avenue Marceau in Paris every day, according to corporate sources. *AFP*

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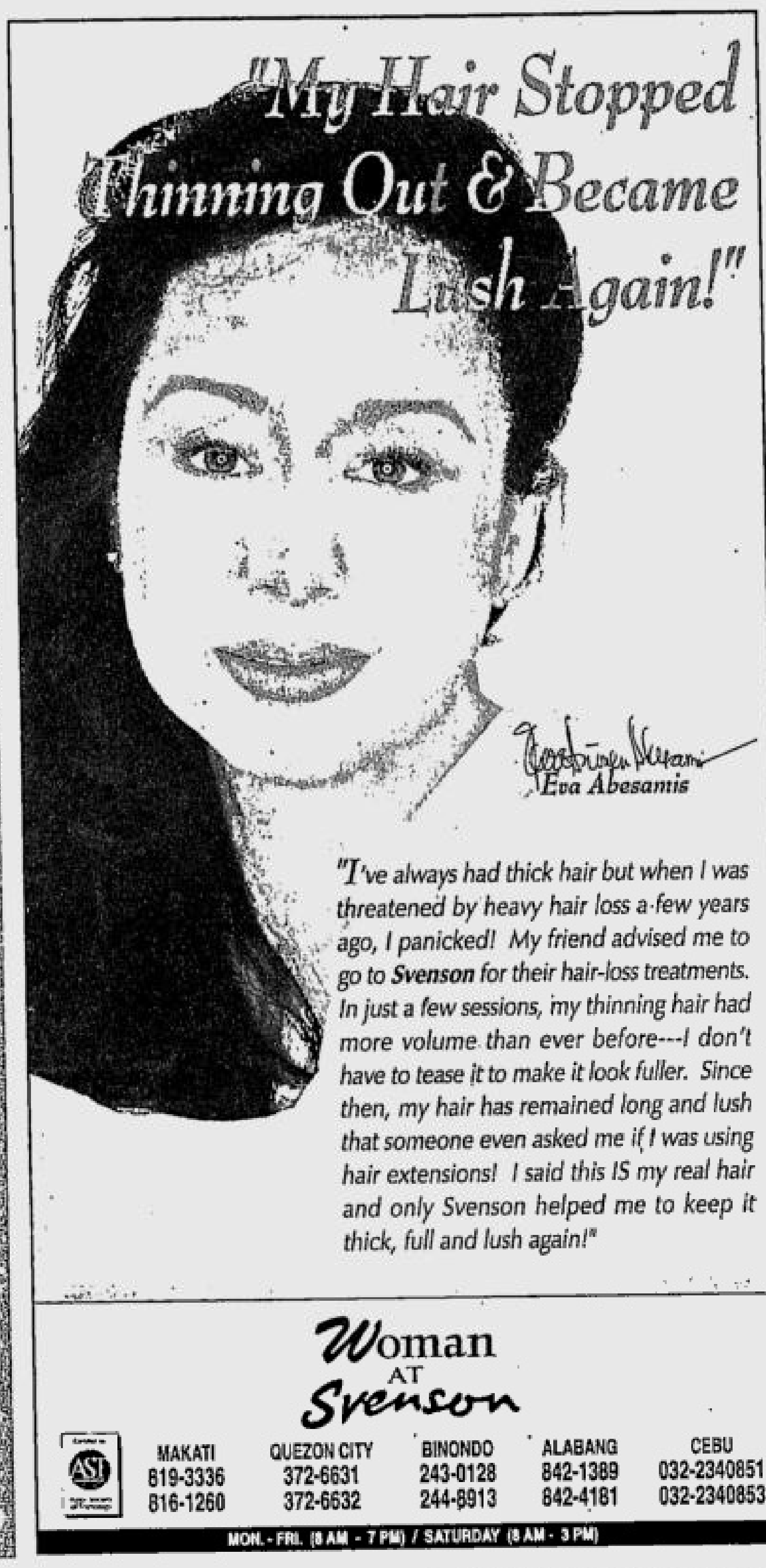
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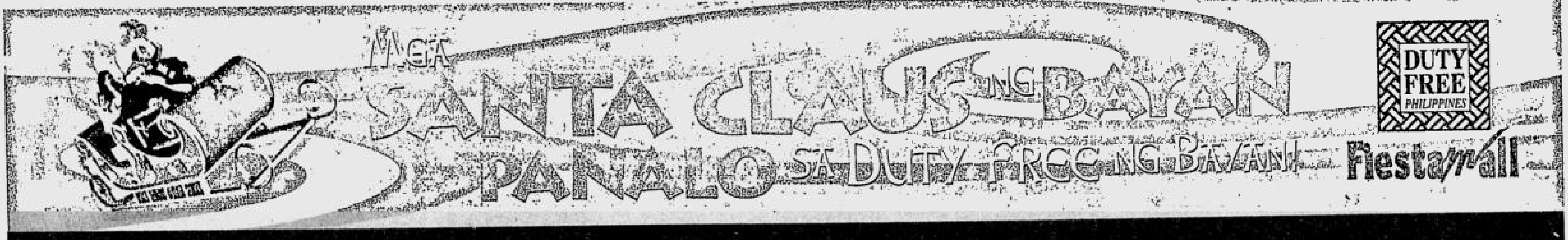
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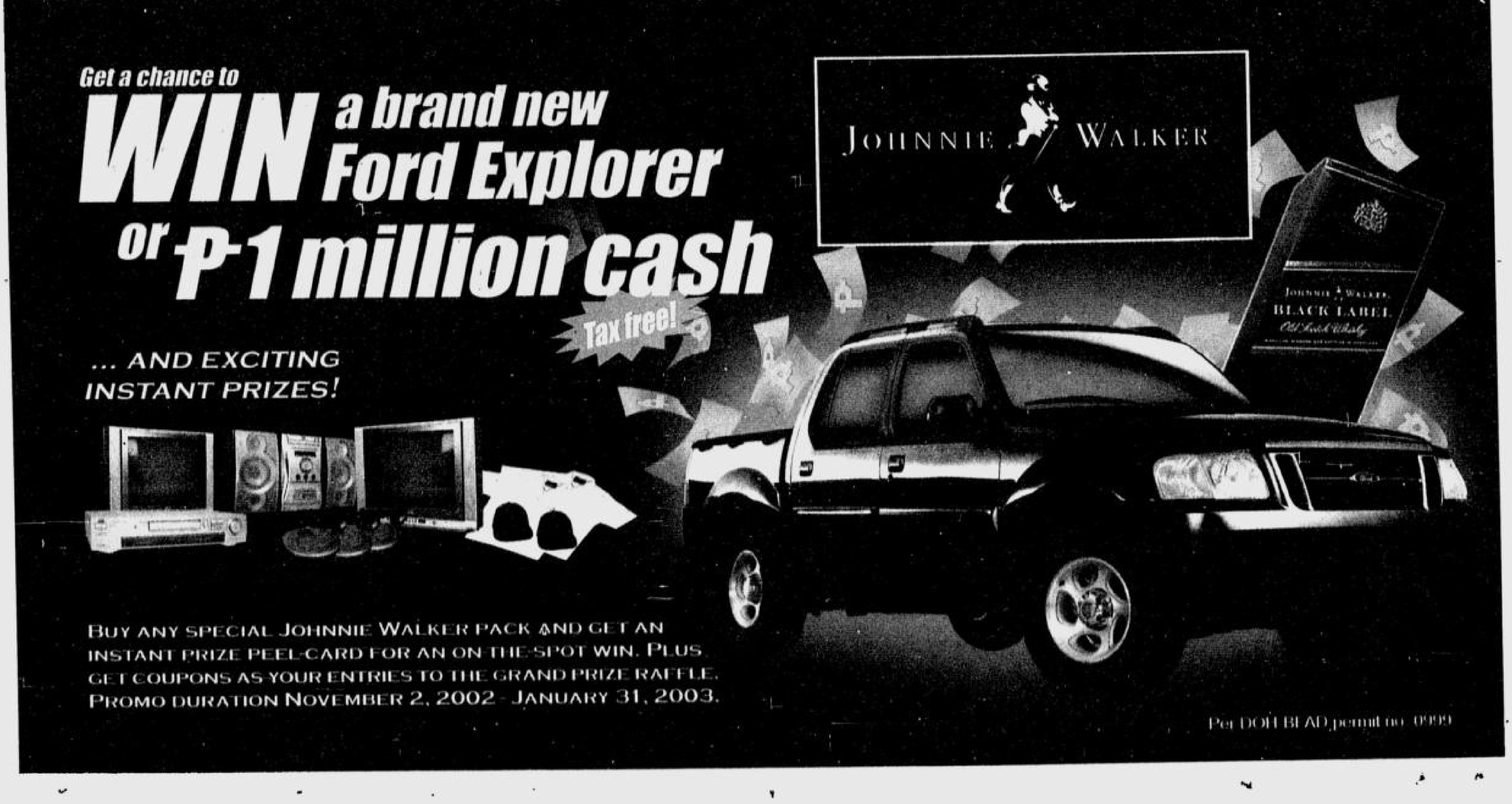
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Bent on the conquest of China

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Ronnie Salvacion

TO TELL you the truth, I'm more scared than excited."

Such words may seem out of character from someone who revolutionized the marketing of ready-to-wear clothes in the country. But marketing wiz Ben Chan, the big man himself behind Bench, has every reason to feel edgy these days as the homegrown brand marks its first foray into China, a vast market of 1.2 billion people where almost every imaginable brand is slugging it out to gain consumer attention.

"China is relatively unknown territory," he says. "I don't know what's in store for us there."

Bench is set to open three stores in China—two in Xiamen and one in Shanghai—before the year ends. And Chan has assembled an international team composed of Chinese, Japanese, Singaporean and Filipino nationals as he takes the great marketing leap forward.

We catch them recently abuzz over a series of fashion shoots at photographer Ronnie Salvacion's studio in Makati. Richard Gomez, Lucy Torres, Jomari Yllana, Assunta de Rossi and the other usual suspects are missing. In their stead during the two-day shoot are Paris-based Chinese model Lu Yan and a stable of Filipino studs such as Marc Nelson, Robby Mananquil, Antonio Aquitania and Chema (aka Kenji) Marquez.

Philippine-born and US-educated creative director Melvin Chua, assisted by Japanese stylist Giant and Singaporean lighting director ND Chow, is calling the shots. Since the team has little time to waste, Chua does away with de rigueur storyboards and instead improvises and relies on his instincts. Leading hair and makeup stylist Patrick Rosas and his assistants don't miss a chance to doll up the models, especially Lu Yan, during breaks.

Darker, more angular

Judging from the first batch of Polaroid shots, Chan and his collaborators have again succeeded in redefining the brand's marketing thrust. In lieu of the glossy, in-your face approach that has sold tons of shirts, jeans and underwear, Salvacion's shots are decidedly darker, more angular and with an editorial feel that succeeds in capturing the models' moods rather than their clothes.

Giant, in fact, twists and deconstructs the clothes almost literally. Thus, we see a pouting Lu Yan sporting a shirt bunched up like a scarf with only the pointed ends of its collar evident. She finishes off the look with a cotton tee worn over a finely knitted stripped sweater. In another shot, she and Chema share the same apparel, only this time the piece is composed of three men's shirts buttoned together as one.

"The dark lighting and the way they present the clothes aren't very Filipino," says Salvacion. "It's a Gap ad with an edgier, darker twist. Even the hairstyles and makeup are unobtrusive."

Except for straight-haired Robby, who sports big curls for the shoot, none of the male models wear eccentric hairdos. If there's one thing evident, all of them, especially Chema, can easily pass off as Chinese or Japanese models with a strain of Western blood.

Lu Yan is no conventional beauty, and she's first to admit it, but the slit-eyed, square-jawed mannequin proves to be a real trouper as she follows Chua's instructions. The 21-year-old's silence is only punctuated by occasional questions in either Chinese or passable English.

Obviously, Lu Yan's 5'10" height, lean

BENT/ p.D4

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OMEGA'S Louie Vargas

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PHOTOS BY TIM YAP

JOHN Hall and Phoemela Barranda model the new Omega Aqua Terra Seamaster in evening wear.

New collection launched, boutique opens

OLIVER Hugentobler, Jean-Claude Monachon, Lucy Torres-Gomez and Dr. Daniel Zuellig

OMEGA had a double-header event recently with the launch of the exclusive collection, the Seamaster Aqua Terra, and the opening of the its boutique in Glorietta.

The event was attended by Omega executives, as well as celebrities and media personalities. Jean-Claude Monachon, Omega's vice-president and head of product development, visited the Philippines for the first time to attend the event. He was accompanied by Omega sales and marketing project manager Oliver Hugentobler, and Zetamark Inc. general manager Louie Vargas, as well as brand manager Martin Lacson. Zuellig big boss, Dr. Daniel Zuellig, also attended.

Other guests included Lucy Torres-Gomez and her parents, Ariel Rivera and Gelli de Belen. Marc Nelson, proudly sporting an Omega watch, hosted the event. Monachon outlined the finer points of the new Aqua Terra collection and the features that put it in a class of its own.

The Seamaster Aqua Terra combines elegance with the robust and rugged design of a divers watch. Inspired by the Omega Railmaster model of the 1950s, the Aqua Terra was designed for professional use, with a special double case back making it highly anti-magnetic and water resistant to a depth of 150 meters/500 feet.

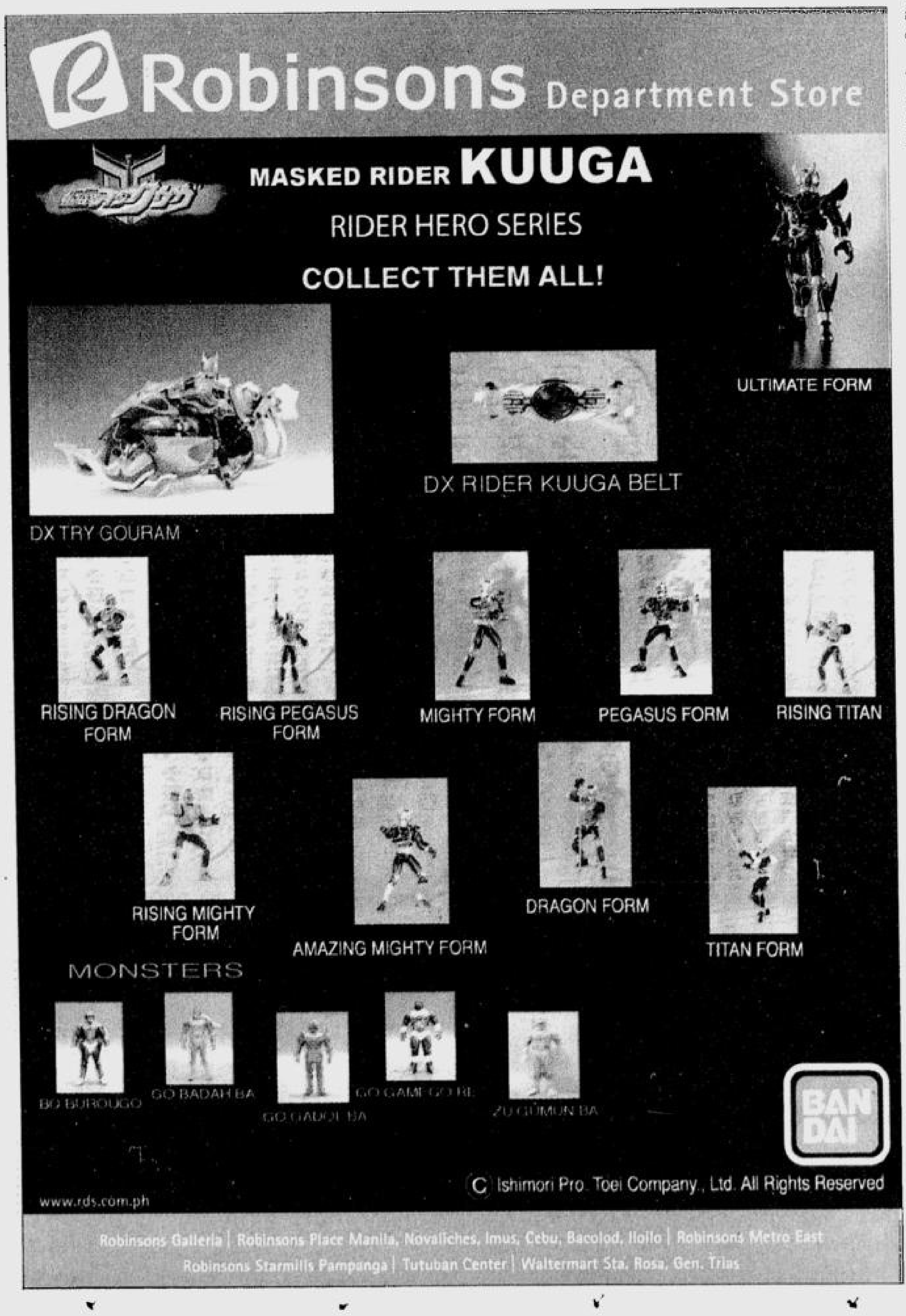
The exclusive design complements Omega's exclusive Co-Axial Escapement calibre 2500 being used in some of the Aqua Terra lines. The Co-Axial movement significantly reduces the friction in its mechanisms, and is certified as a chronometer by the official Swiss watch-testing institute (COSC).

Some of the country's top models presented watches in the Aqua Terra Collection, including Robby Mananquil, Rachel Soriano, Gary Dulatas, Verns Buckley, John Hall and Phoemela Barranda.

The Omega Boutique is located at the 2/L Glorietta 1. Torres-Gomez, Monachon, Hugentobler and Zuellig cut the ceremonial ribbon.

Housing some of the exclusive Omega timepieces, the Omega Boutique is every square-foot elegant, with all the furnishings shipped directly from Omega's head office in Switzerland. Poster-size images of Omega Ambassadors adorn the store windows, along with the collections associated with them. Omega's signature scarlet motif is very evident inside the boutique, accentuated by striking display modules.

DIRECTOR Robbie Dinglasan and Isha Andaya



Robinsons Department Store
MASKED RIDER KUUGA
RIDER HERO SERIES
COLLECT THEM ALL!
www.rds.com.ph
© Ishimori Pro. Toei Company., Ltd. All Rights Reserved
Robinsons Galleria | Robinsons Place Manila, Novaliches, Imus, Cebu, Bacolod, Iloilo | Robinsons Metro East
Robinsons Starmills Pampanga | Tutuban Center | Waltermart Sta. Rosa, Gen. Trias

Prayer Warriors conduct recollection

LIVE AND LET LIVE

Tita Dulce

DEAR Tita Dulce,

Thank you for writing about the Prayer Warriors of the Holy Souls (PWHS).

Your readers may want to know about our one-day recollection that will be conducted by Fr. Joseph Miras, SVD, tomorrow, for PWHS members and anyone interested. It will be held at the Worship Hall of the Spirit of Love Catholic Community, Manila Seedling Bank, Quezon Ave., corner Edsa, Quezon City. For reservation, they may call 531-2157/0394 local 101.

The program starts with registration 8-8:30 a.m. It includes confession, general assembly, group sharing, and Mass at 4 p.m. Registration fee is P100.

Our group, the PWHS, is also available to conduct teach-ins to groups of at least 50, wanting to know more about the apostolate. This service is free.

CHITA G. MONFORT
PWHS executive director

Thank you for giving more information on how we can bridge the distance between where we are and those in the great beyond, and how to help them enter heaven sooner.

Readers will be interested to know that the pamphlet "Read Me or Rue It" (in English, Filipino, Ilonggo and Bicolano) and novena prayers (in English and Filipino) are available to prospective members for free, although donations will be appreciated to help defray mailing and handling costs.

Their address: A-1 Guevent Commercial Center, 52 Libertad corner M. Cruz, Mandaluyong City; or e-mail pwhs@skynet.net.

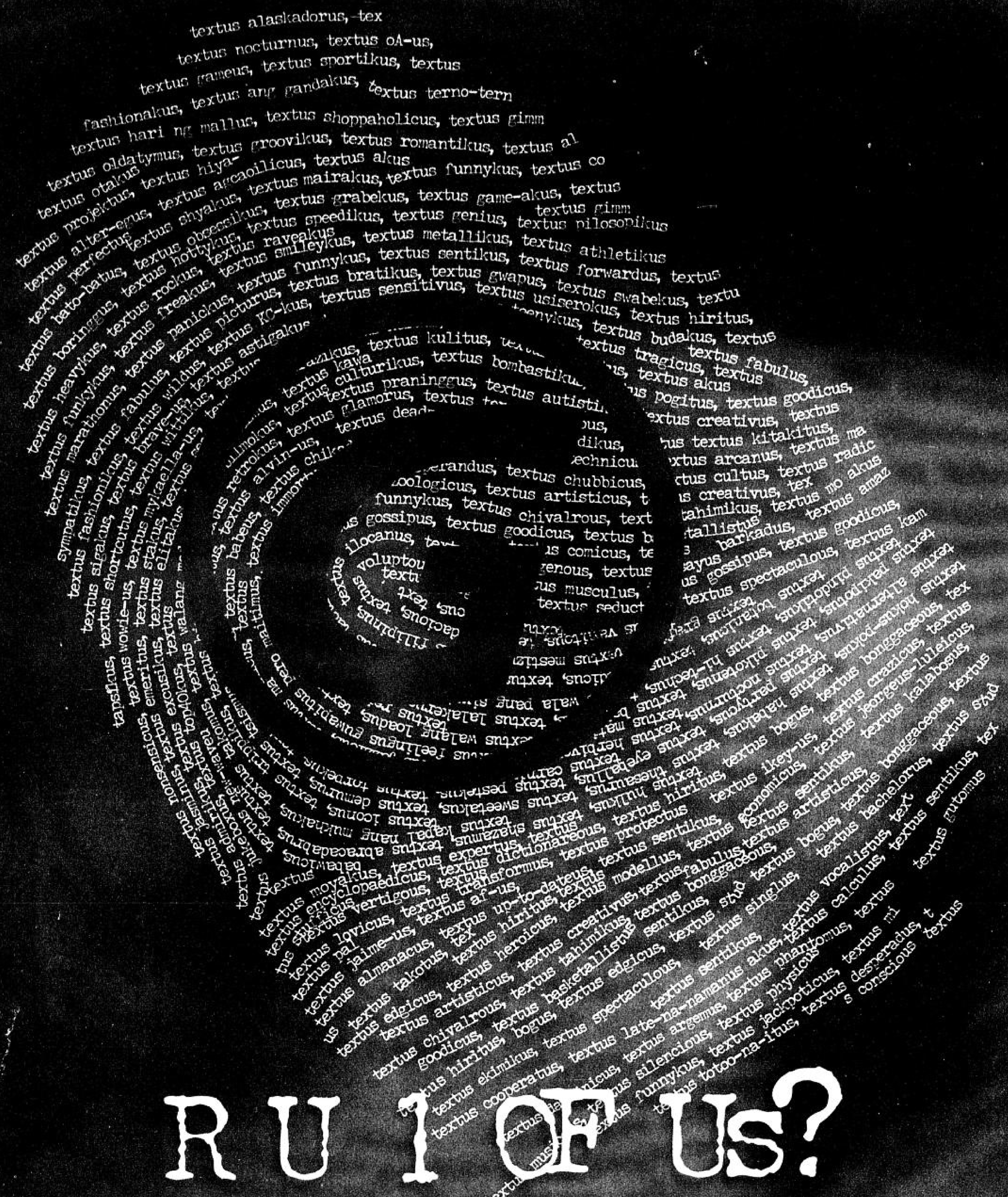
Boyfriend doesn't have marriage in mind

For the past two years, I have been lucky. I work as a secretary but I still live with my parents because my salary is not enough for me to live on my own. I have had a boyfriend for over a year now. We were close friends for more than two years, then he courted me when he also got a job. We have talked about our future together but lately, he seems engrossed in his job, just calling me on weekends. Of course, he invites me to the movies but most of the time, he just brings me fried chicken and snacks when he visits on Sundays.

Should I talk to him about our future together, or should I just keep quiet? Sometimes, I want to ask him if he wants to get married and, if not, suggest that we stop seeing each other. I have a friend with the same problem with her boyfriend. What should we do?

LILY

Just stay calm, focus on your job and, if he continues seeing you on weekends, be charming and gracious. Give him time. After all, both of you are still young, and the times now are not normal. Be glad that you have a boyfriend. Don't suggest that he should stop seeing you. There is a chance, of course, that, if threatened with a breakup, he will propose marriage so as not to lose you. But it might also make him realize that he still has a lot of problems and will therefore be glad that you are letting him go. Just live each day to the fullest and pray for continued blessings.


textus alaskadorus, tex
textus nocturnus, textus oA-us,
textus gameus, textus sportikus, textus
textus ang gandakus, textus terno-tern
fashionakus, textus hari ng mallus, textus shoppaholicus, textus gimm
textus oldatymus, textus groovikus, textus romantikus, textus al
textus otakus, textus hiya-, textus aacaoilicus, textus akus
textus mairakus, textus funnykus, textus co
textus grabekus, textus game-akus, textus
textus gimm
textus speedikus, textus genius, textus pilosopikus
textus metallikus, textus athletikus
textus funnykus, textus sentikus, textus forwardus, textus
textus bratikus, textus gwapus, textus swabekus, textu
textus sensitivus, textus usiserokus, textus hiritus,
textus budakus, textus
textus tragicus, textus fabulus,
textus akus
textus pogitus, textus goodicus,
textus creativus, textus
R U 1 OF Us?

Gen Textus

The first purely connected generation; the first breed of humans to grow up with cellphones.

Modus operandi: constant balitaan, yayaan and bonding.

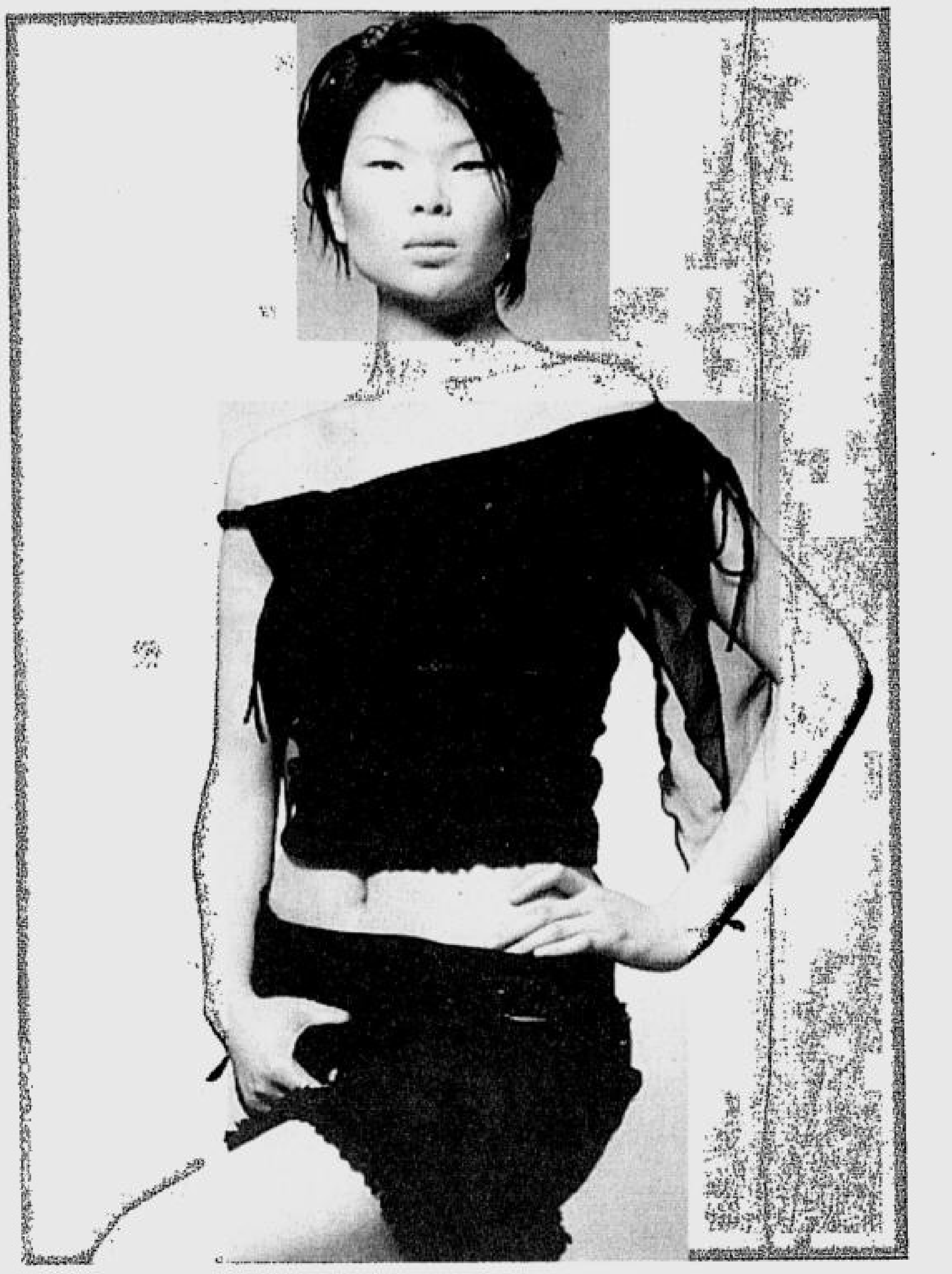
Preferred language: texting.
Biggest fear: loneliness. Best cure: each other's company.

Be one of us. Call 730-1000.

gentxt
10/02
TRISHA SANTOS
2012

making great things possible

Globe
HANDYPHONE



Bent on the conquest of China

From page D1

build, exotic looks —to most Westerners, anyway—and the confidence to make them work for her have become her ticket to break free from an obscure life in a remote village in Jiangxi province. She was modeling in Beijing when a Paris-based agent spotted her almost three years ago. She's now a recognizable face in Beijing, Shanghai and other big Chinese cities and one of the hottest Asian models for the likes of Christian Dior, Gucci and Lacroix.

In keeping with Chua's desire to focus on the clothes, Rosas keeps Lu Yan's makeup light and simple. "It's almost bare," says Rosas, who crimps the model's straight black hair on Day 2. "It's what I call the sun-kissed, California look."

"She's not our idea of a typical Chinese beauty," says Chan. "But she has loads of character."

What about Bench's trademark underwear shots? Sorry, they're a total departure from the brand's attention-grabbing, temperature-raising style as well. Again, the images are darker and moodier but without losing their suggestiveness. In Chua's words, they're "more sensual than sexy."

Shanghai-crazy

So, what's Chan up to now?

"Name it, Shanghai has it," he says, referring to how stiff competition has become in China's once and probably future commercial capital. "Conventional approaches in advertising no longer work. They're so much ahead of us."

Even Lu Yan shares Chan's observations. "Shanghai is now like New York and Paris," she says. "Everything is there. I think they're making the right move by creating impact. They can't do it ordinary way because, if they do, they won't get noticed."

Celebrity-driven ads may still work in the Philippines, but not so much in China so Chua hopes to make a splash through stylized images. "Most of the clothes are basic," he says, "but that shouldn't limit us from playing around with the concept. In this case, we're taking it to the extreme." And that means no to safe, catalog-inspired pictures.

A great deal of the shots is bound to end up on billboards and store posters there. One of the Bench stores will be in SM—not in Megamall, of course, but the one Henry Sy is building in Xiamen. Chan and his managers have yet to decide whether or not to use the images here.

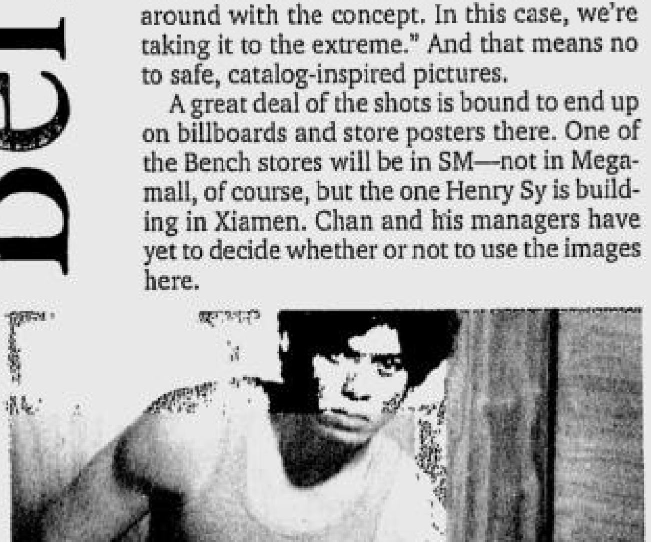
Technically, this won't be Bench's first attempt to penetrate the Chinese market. It actually opened its first outlet in China in a small corner of a big department store a decade ago. The venture lasted for three years. This year, a bigger, bolder and more focused Bench is back.

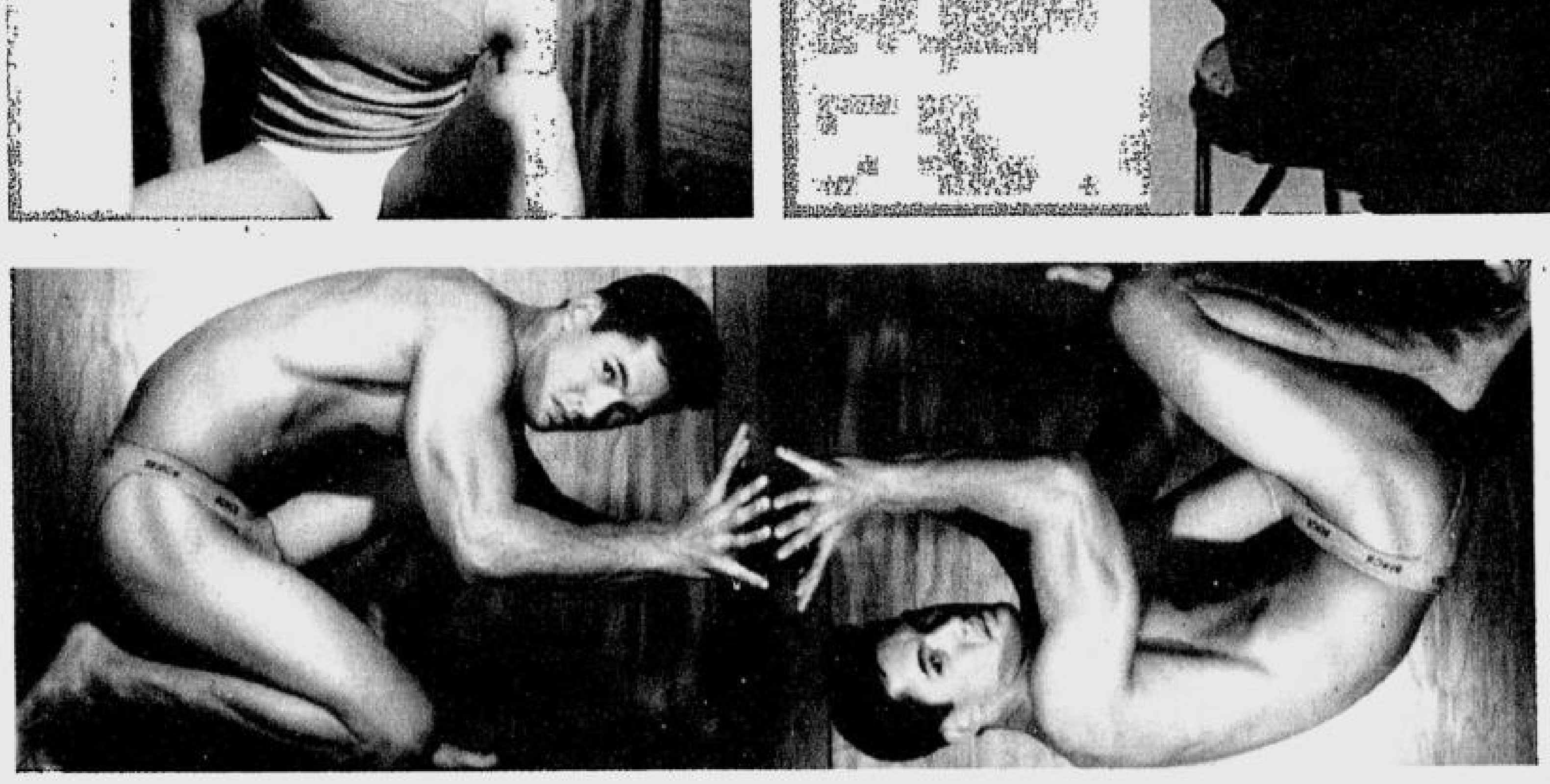
In fact, Bench's entry into China would have been earlier had it not encountered a major snag: someone had beaten them to the Bench name. Chan had to work around the problem by coming up with a new name without dropping the word "Bench." Thus, the company's products will be marketed in China as BluBench and RedBench.

"I decided on Blu because we're pretty strong on the denim line," he says, "and red to distinguish items such as souvenir t-shirts and various stuff for tourists."

Blessing

In a country where people experience the full changing of the seasons, such a delay proved to be a blessing in disguise for Bench. "Had we gone there several months earlier," he says, "we would have been caught flat-footed. What would we offer the market now that winter is fast approaching? We know next to nothing about winter clothes."





Chan and his managers are using the time to study, design and eventually manufacture the company's fall and winter line for next year. Majority of Bench's clothes are designed in the Philippines and manufactured in China, but he plans to ultimately tap the expertise of Chinese designers who are obviously more familiar with the market's needs and preferences.

As for those racy, one-night-only underwear shows that never fail to generate buzz among Filipinos, Chan has yet to study their probable impact on the Chinese. Give him time.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

CLOTHES AND UNDERWEAR:
BENCH

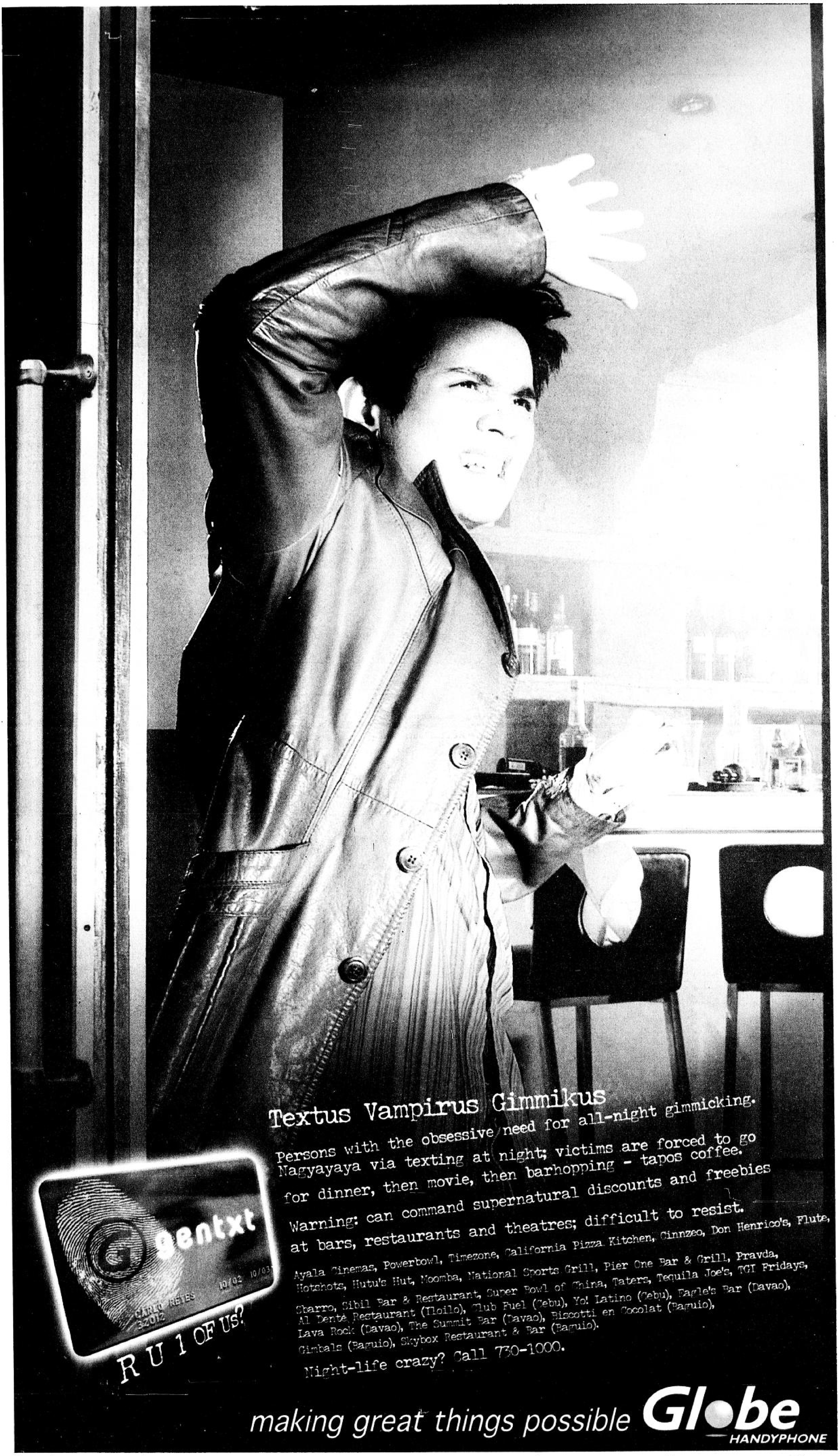
MODELS:
LU YAN, MARC NELSON, ROBBY MANANQUIL, AND ANTONIO AQUITANIA

CREATIVE DIRECTOR:
MELVIN CHUA

HAIR AND MAKEUP:
PATRICK ROSAS

STYLING: GIANT

LIGHTING DIRECTOR:
ND CHOW



R U 1 OF Us?

Textus Vampirus Gimmikus

Persons with the obsessive need for all-night gimmicking. Nagyayaya via texting at night; victims are forced to go for dinner, then movie, then barhopping - tapos coffee.

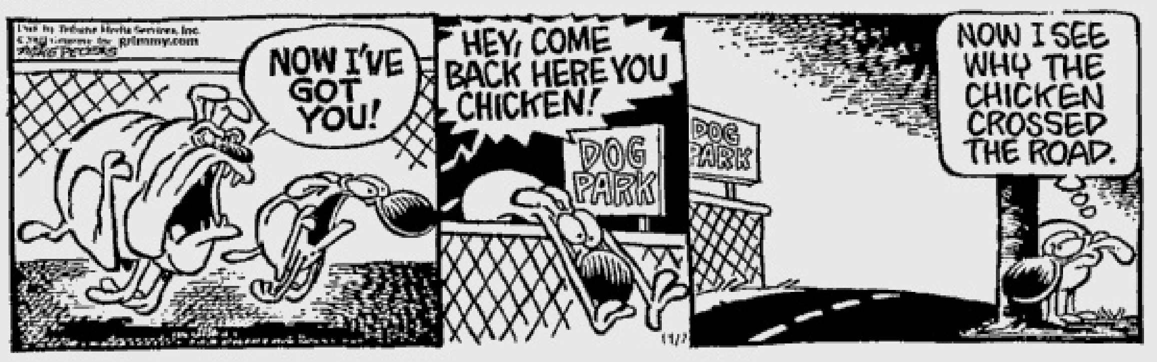
Warning: can command supernatural discounts and freebies at bars, restaurants and theatres; difficult to resist.

Ayala Cinemas, Powerbowl, Timezone, California Pizza Kitchen, Cinnzeo, Don Henrico's, Flute, Hotshots, Hutu's Hut, Moomba, National Sports Grill, Pier One Bar & Grill, Pravda, Sbarro, Sibil Bar & Restaurant, Super Bowl of China, Taters, Tequila Joe's, TGI Fridays, Al Denté Restaurant (Iloilo), Club Fuel (Cebu), Yo! Latino (Cebu), Eagle's Bar (Davao), Lava Rock (Davao), The Summit Bar (Davao), Biscotti en Cocolat (Baguio), Gimbals (Baguio), Skybox Restaurant & Bar (Baguio).

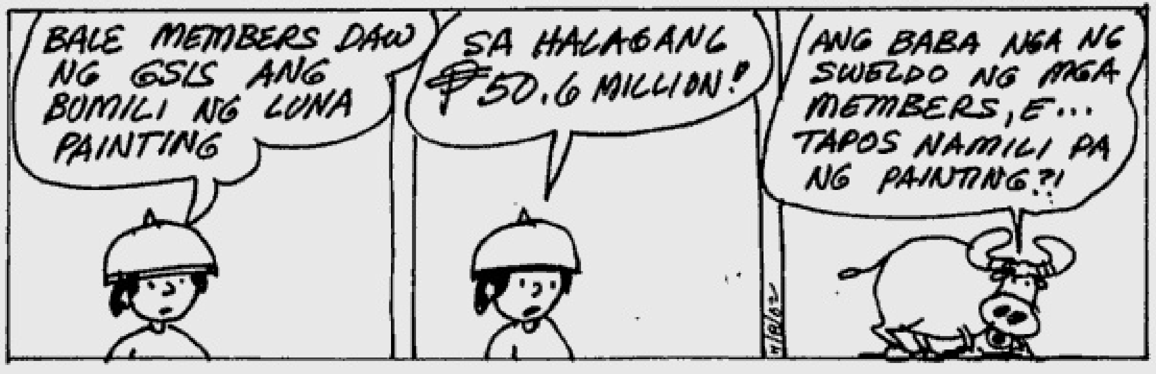
Night-life crazy? Call 730-1000.

making great things possible Globe HANDYPHONE

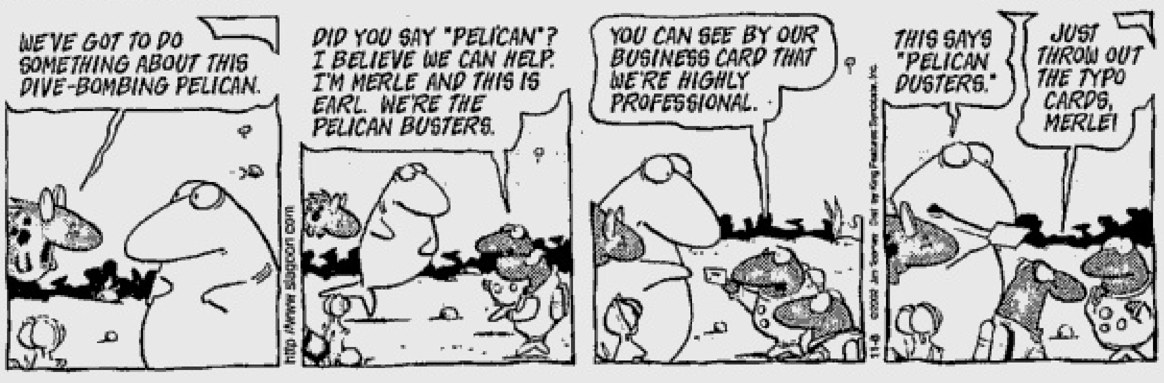
MOTHER GOOSE AND GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS


NOW I'VE GOT YOU!
HEY, COME BACK HERE YOU CHICKEN!
DOG PARK
DOG PARK
NOW I SEE WHY THE CHICKEN CROSSED THE ROAD.
11/7

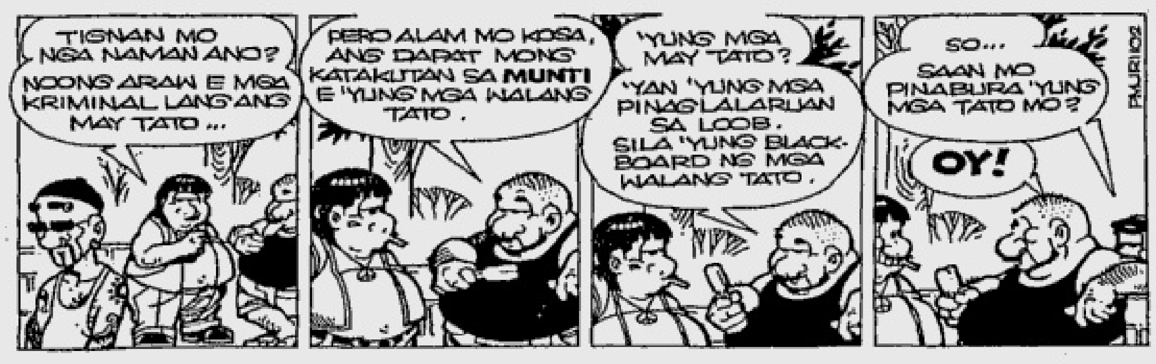
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


BALE MEMBERS DAW NG GSIS ANG BUMILI NG LUNA PAINTING
SA HALAGANG ₱50.6 MILLION!
ANG BABA NGA NG SWELDO NG MGA MEMBERS, E... TAPOS NAMILI PA NG PAINTING?!
11/8/02

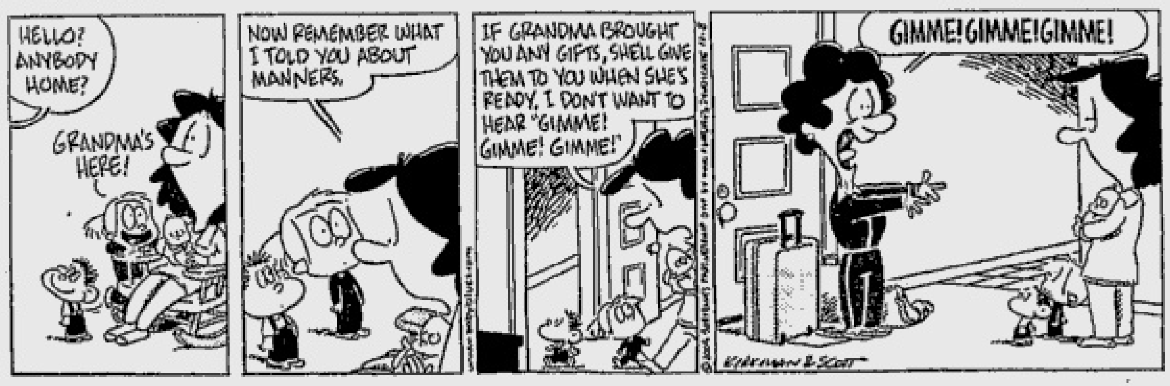
SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


WE'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THIS DIVE-BOMBING PELICAN.
DID YOU SAY "PELICAN"? I BELIEVE WE CAN HELP. I'M MERLE AND THIS IS EARL. WE'RE THE PELICAN BUSTERS.
YOU CAN SEE BY OUR BUSINESS CARD THAT WE'RE HIGHLY PROFESSIONAL.
THIS SAYS "PELICAN DUSTERS."
JUST THROW OUT THE TYPO CARDS, MERLE!
http://www.slagoon.com

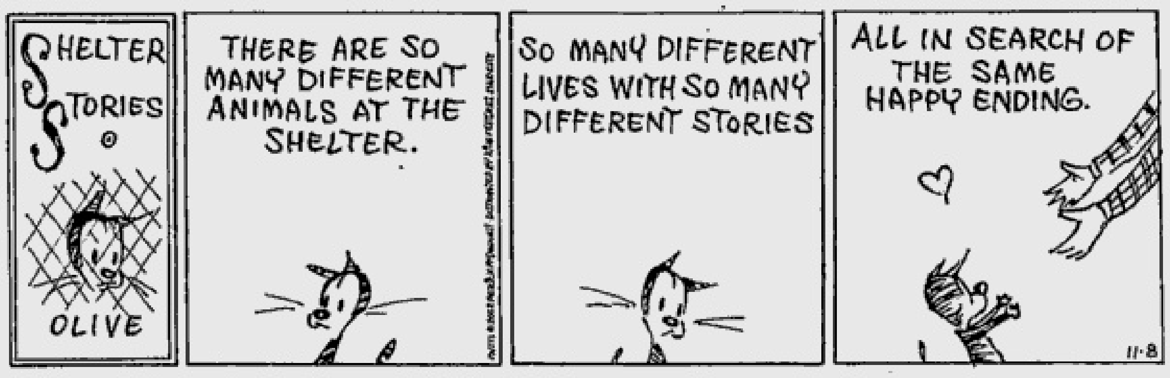
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


TIGNAN MO NGA NAMAN ANO? NOONG ARAW E MGA KRIMINAL LANG ANG MAY TATO...
PERO ALAM MO KOSA, ANG DAPAT MONG KATAKUTAN SA MUNTI E 'YUNG MGA WALANG TATO.
'YUNG MGA MAY TATO?
'YAN 'YUNG MGA PINAGLALARUAN SA LOOB. SILA 'YUNG BLACK-BOARD NG MGA WALANG TATO.
SO... SAAN MO PINABURA 'YUNG MGA TATO MO?
OY!
PMJR102

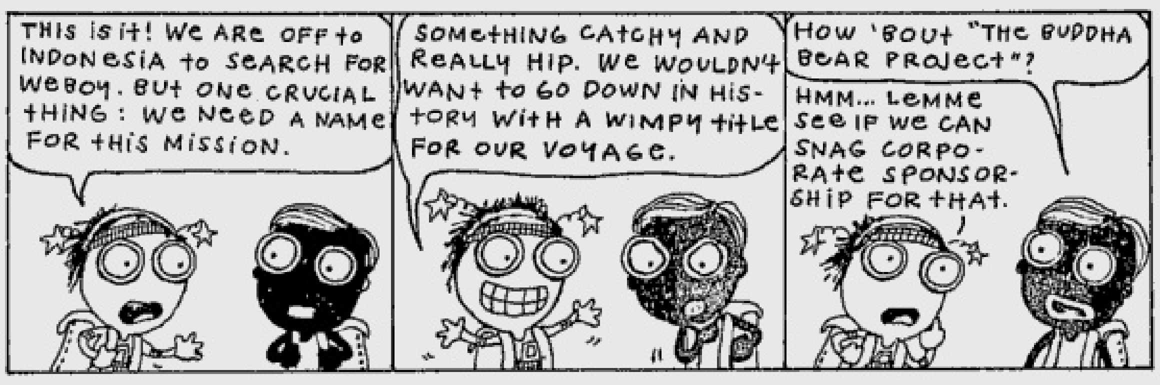
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


HELLO? ANYBODY HOME?
GRANDMA'S HERE!
NOW REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU ABOUT MANNERS.
IF GRANDMA BROUGHT YOU ANY GIFTS, SHE'LL GIVE THEM TO YOU WHEN SHE'S READY. I DON'T WANT TO HEAR "GIMME! GIMME! GIMME!"
GIMME! GIMME! GIMME!
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

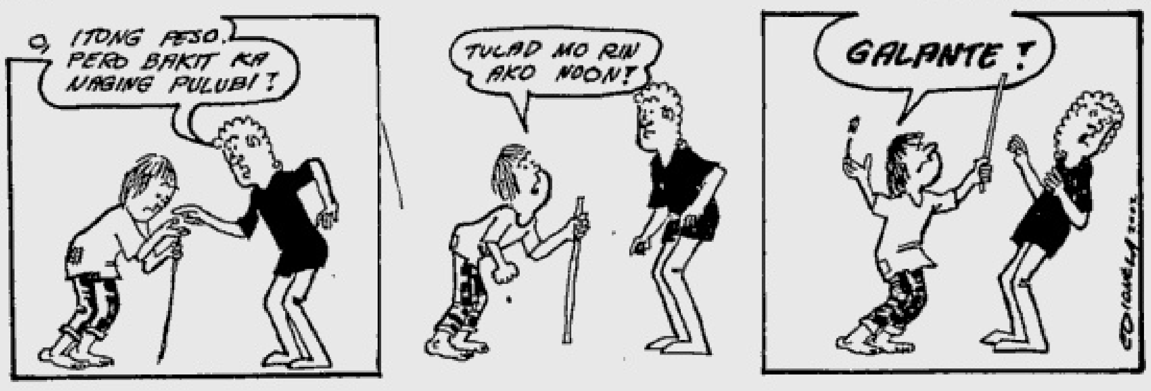
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHELTER STORIES
OLIVE
THERE ARE SO MANY DIFFERENT ANIMALS AT THE SHELTER.
SO MANY DIFFERENT LIVES WITH SO MANY DIFFERENT STORIES
ALL IN SEARCH OF THE SAME HAPPY ENDING.
11-8

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


THIS IS IT! WE ARE OFF TO INDONESIA TO SEARCH FOR WEBOY. BUT ONE CRUCIAL THING: WE NEED A NAME FOR THIS MISSION.
SOMETHING CATCHY AND REALLY HIP. WE WOULDN'T WANT TO GO DOWN IN HISTORY WITH A WIMPY TITLE FOR OUR VOYAGE.
HOW 'BOUT "THE BUDDHA BEAR PROJECT"?
HMM... LEMME SEE IF WE CAN SNAG CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP FOR THAT.

SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


ITONG PESO. PERO BAKIT KA NAGING PULUBI?
TULAD MO RIN AKO NOON!
GALANTE!
DIONELA 2002

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Katharine Hepburn, Patti Page, Bonnie Raitt, Parker Posey

Happy Birthday: You may be inclined to overreact this year, but if you can control your impulses, you should be able to make some positive gains. This can be a good year if you take note of your past mistakes and refuse to let anyone lead you astray. Rely on yourself and you won't be disappointed. Your numbers are 3, 15, 28, 31, 36, 49

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Travel will be tiring but lucrative. Your intuition will lead you in the right direction. Follow it where business ventures are concerned. You may want to get some additional legal advice.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Past unpleasant memories may surface. Do your best to settle these issues once and for all. Put the past behind you and focus on the present.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Your emotional reactions may get you into hot water. Take a deep breath before you interact. Concentrate on work and steer clear of emotional confrontations. You are not seeing the whole picture.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You may be having difficulty getting your point across. Take your time and be precise. The more complete your explanation, the easier it will be for others to support you.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You are more interested in entertainment and having fun than work right now. It may be time for a career change. Take a look at what you love to do and see if there is a way to turn it into a lucrative career.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Past experiences that were stressful should be left alone regardless of how hard it is to say no. Just remember the anxiety you felt and be firm. Try to be disciplined.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You can do some research today that will bring you new ideas. Place a call to someone who can't get out due to illness or old age. Your visit would be just the right pick-me-up.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): You may find yourself doing a little traveling today. Visit friends and relatives that you don't get to spend much time with. You should take the evening to relax with your mate.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Your contributions have not gone unnoticed. There are those in positions of authority who appreciate your efforts. Good news should come by phone or mail. Be eager to celebrate your good fortune.

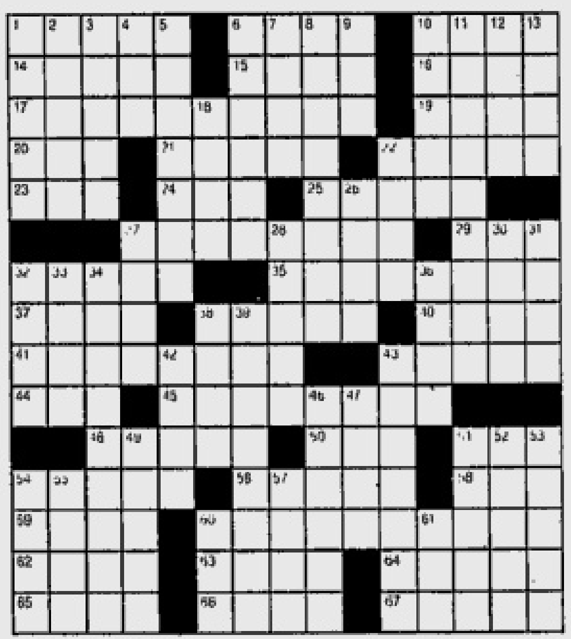
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Secret affairs may be exciting now, but the consequences will by no means be to your liking. Don't get drawn into other people's personal problems. You have enough to deal with.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): This is not the day to ask for favors or loans. Others will not be convinced of your needs. You will have to go over your financial statements carefully and work out a budget you can live with.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): You can make professional gains if you play your cards right. Look for opportunities to climb the ladder of success by mingling with the hotshots. You will learn a great deal and may get some good leads.

Birthday Baby: You will be determined and willing to go the extra mile to reach your life goals. Your tendency to think big may cause some grief, but it will also make you strive harder.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY
11/8/02

ACROSS
1 After, in Arles
6 Moroccan port
10 Checks out
14 Winter hazard
15 Twice DXXVII
16 Earlier Persian
17 Retire
19 Barred room
20 Marksman
21 __ Hills, IL
22 Actress Bo
23 Stroke gently
24 Newt
25 Concerned one
27 Daughter of Oedipus
29 Bladed pole
32 Audibly
35 Drawstring handbag
37 Inheritance factor
38 Western state capital
40 Son of Judah
41 Fetch
43 Van Halen or Murphy
44 Fire flakes
45 White Sea arm
48 Chemical compound
50 Open hostilities
51 Bilko or Snorkel, e.g.
54 Milo of "The Verdict"
56 Growl fiercely
58 Darjeeling or Earl Grey
59 Thanks __!
60 Septenary periods successively
62 Brazen solicitor
63 French father
64 Fatter than fat
65 Protagonist
66 Additional conjunctions
67 2000 candidate Ralph

DOWN
1 Org. of songwriters
2 Come in second
3 Sublease a flat
4 Marine shocker
5 Allowance
6 Mosaic pieces
7 Ray of "God's Little Acre"
8 Complete failures
9 Leafy climber
10 Host
11 All the time
12 Margin
13 Search for
18 __-Hartley Labor Act
22 Three in Berlin
26 Poker fee
27 Violinist Leopold
28 "Peer Gynt" composer
30 Jai follower
31 Russo of "Tin Cup"
32 Taj Mahal's city
33 Dregs
34 When the big hand is up
36 Buffalo Bill
38 Nota __ (note well)
39 Supervised
42 Little bit
43 Near the beginning
46 Rouses from sleep
47 Fishhook point
49 Brief argument
51 Gallant mount
52 Formation flyers
53 Barker's customer
54 Solemn word
55 Blackthorn
57 Geek
60 New Deal agcy.
61 Fighters' org.

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

B	M	O	C	■	D	E	B	A	R	■	B	A	R	E
L	E	N	O	■	A	D	A	G	E	■	U	S	E	R
O	M	A	N	■	M	U	S	E	D	■	F	I	N	S
C	O	N	T	R	A	C	T	■	B	U	F	F	E	T
■	■	■	R	A	G	E	■	D	I	R	E	■	■	■
D	E	F	A	M	E	■	B	A	R	I	T	O	N	E
E	R	I	C	S	■	C	A	R	D	S	■	W	E	N
C	O	L	T	■	B	A	S	E	S	■	I	L	I	A
O	D	E	■	F	U	M	E	D	■	K	N	E	L	T
R	E	S	P	I	T	E	S	■	B	O	T	T	L	E
■	■	■	U	N	T	O	■	S	A	F	I	■	■	■
P	U	T	T	E	R	■	I	N	T	I	M	A	T	E
A	N	A	T	■	E	R	G	O	T	■	A	R	E	A
P	I	L	E	■	S	H	O	R	E	■	T	I	N	S
A	V	E	R	■	S	O	R	E	R	■	E	D	D	Y

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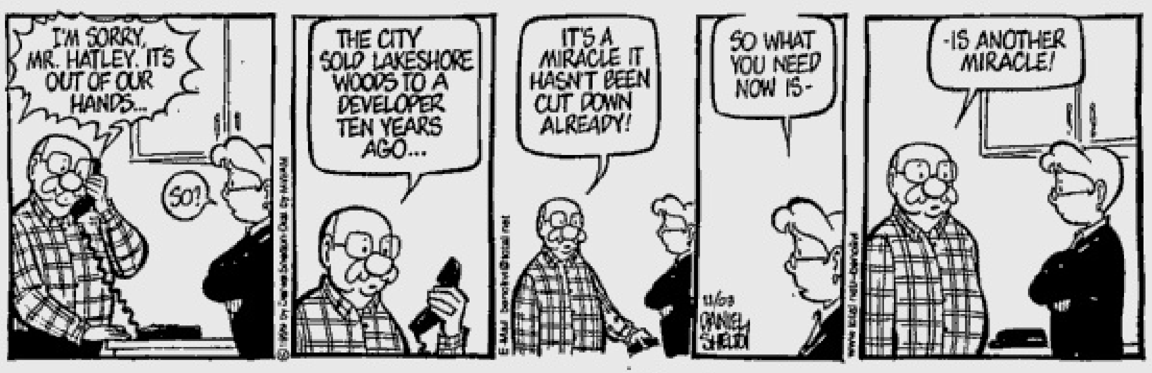
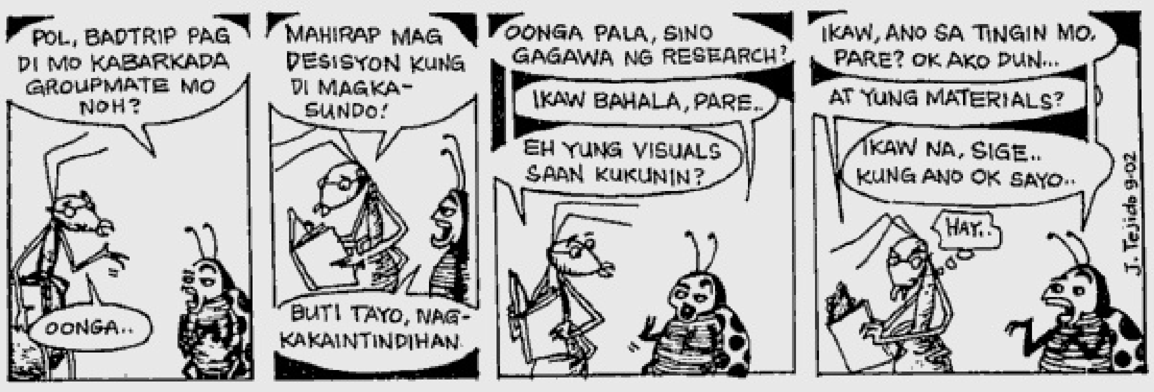
11/8/02

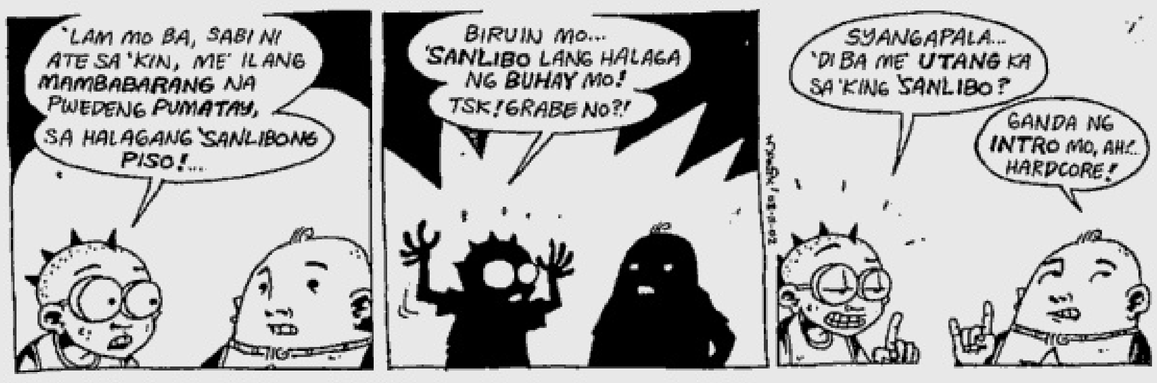
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


I'M SORRY, MR. HATLEY. IT'S OUT OF OUR HANDS...
SO?
THE CITY SOLD LAKESHORE WOODS TO A DEVELOPER TEN YEARS AGO...
IT'S A MIRACLE IT HASN'T BEEN CUT DOWN ALREADY!
SO WHAT YOU NEED NOW IS-
-IS ANOTHER MIRACLE!
DANIEL SHELTON

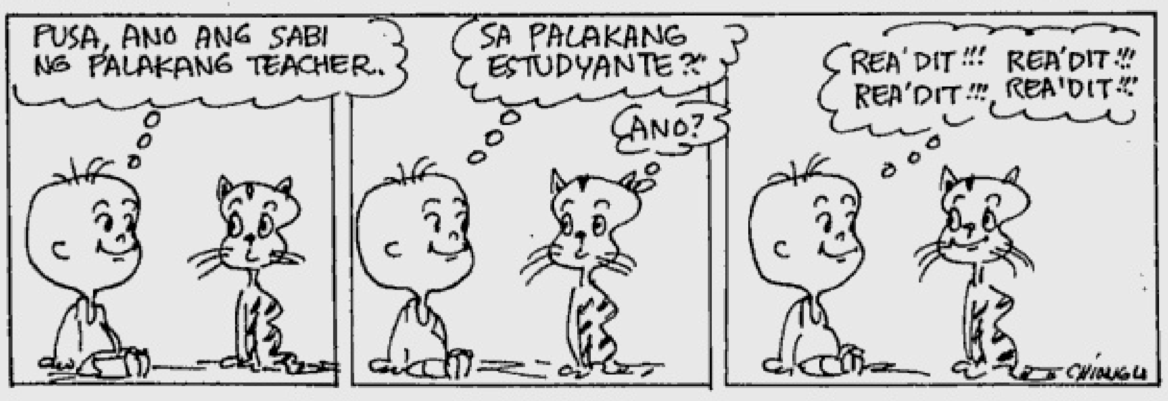
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


POL, BADTRIP PAG DI MO KABARKADA GROUPMATE MO NOH?
OONGA..
MAHIRAP MAG DESISYON KUNG DI MAGKA-SUNDO!
BUTI TAYO, NAG-KAKAINTINDIHAN.
OONGA PALA, SINO GAGAWA NG RESEARCH?
IKAW BAHALA, PARE..
EH YUNG VISUALS SAAN KUKUNIN?
IKAW, ANO SA TINGIN MO, PARE? OK AKO DUN...
AT YUNG MATERIALS?
IKAW NA, SIGE.. KUNG ANO OK SAYO..
HAY..
J. Tejido 9-02

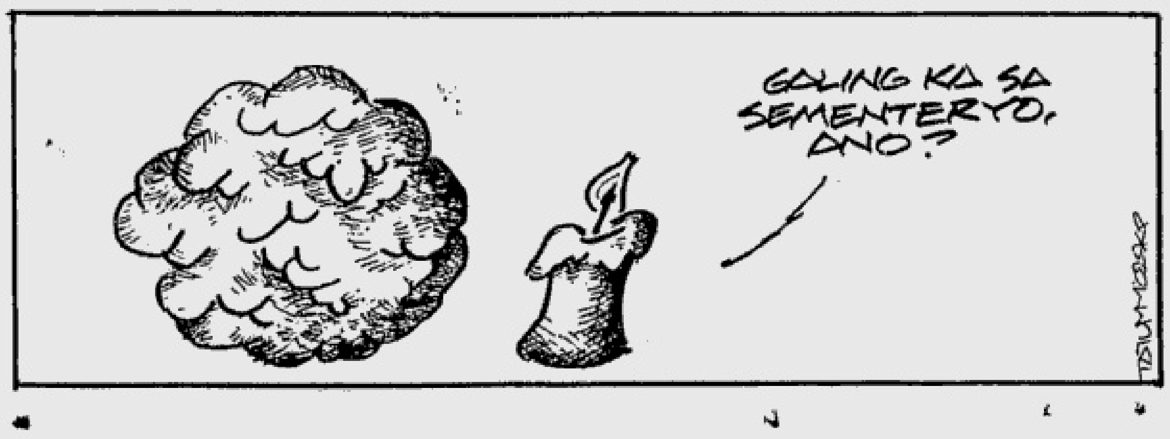
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


'LAM MO BA, SABI NI ATE SA 'KIN, ME' ILANG MAMBABARANG NA PWEDENG PUMATAY,
SA HALAGANG 'SANLIBONG PISO!...
BIRUIN MO... 'SANLIBO LANG HALAGA NG BUHAY MO! TSK! GRABE NO?!
SYANGAPALA... 'DI BA ME' UTANG KA SA 'KING 'SANLIBO?
GANDA NG INTRO MO, AH!.. HARDCORE!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


PUSA, ANO ANG SABI NG PALAKANG TEACHER..
SA PALAKANG ESTUDYANTE?
ANO?
REA'DIT!!! REA'DIT!!! REA'DIT!!! REA'DIT!!!
CHIONGLO

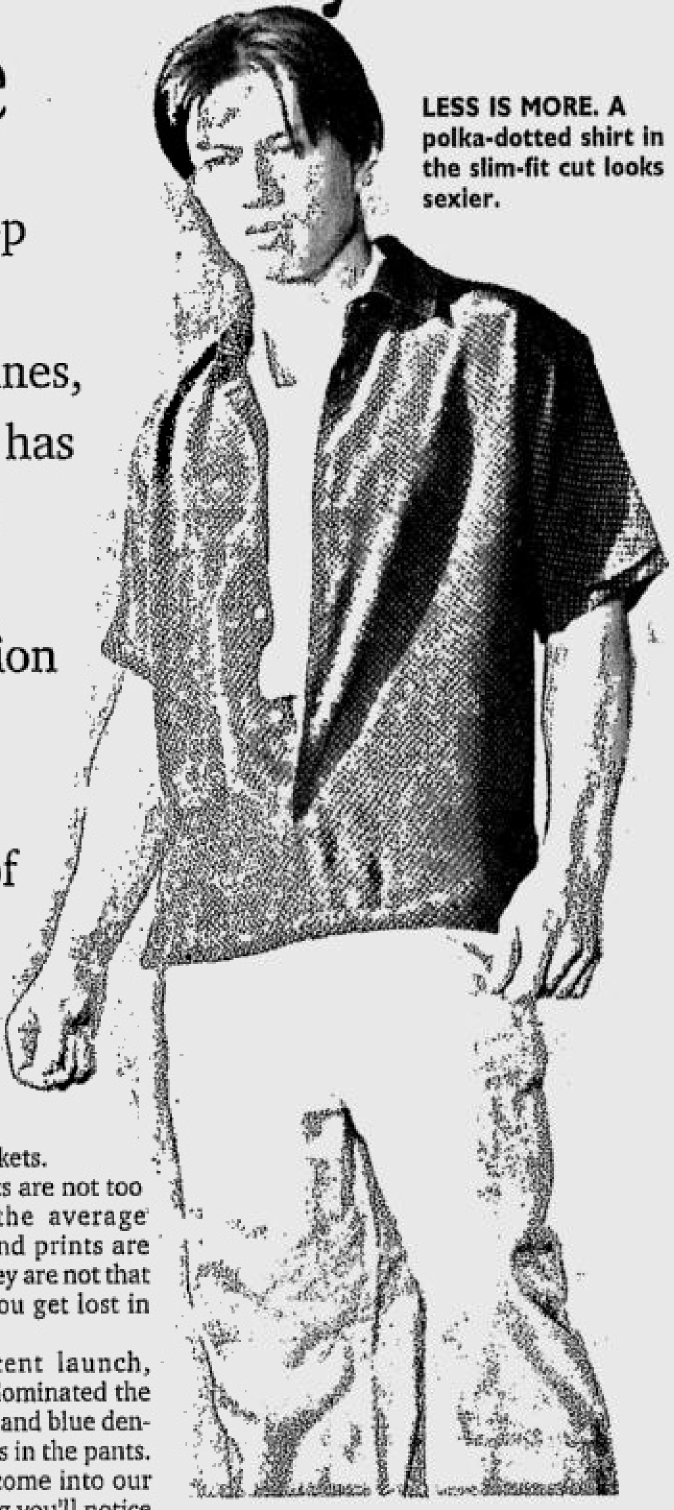
TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


GALING KA SA SEMENTERYO, ANO?

The new-century alpha male

Text by Allison W. Lopez
Photos by Romy Homillada

From a shop carrying imported lines, Novecento has reinvented itself as a men's fashion house offering a local line of classic yet exciting styles



LESS IS MORE. A polka-dotted shirt in the slim-fit cut looks sexier.

THE SLEEVES do not reach the elbow, and the shirt's hemline falls just a little below the waist. Yes, it's "bitin," and the audience can only agree among themselves as they watch hunky male models clad in classy slim-fit clothes from Novecento.

But the "hanging" effect refines the silhouette, making it slim and classy.

"We usually follow the trend in Europe," says Merle Tiongson of Novecento. "Right now, we use the Italian slim-fit cut, which contours the body and creates a slender effect, unlike baggy clothes that weigh down the wearer."

Novecento has just launched itself as a men's ready-to-wear brand, after five years as a house of imported lines.

In 1996, Novecento began to carry such imported RTW brands as Ralph Lauren and Tommy Hilfiger in its Shoppesville, Greenhills branch. Last year, business partners Tiongson and Jon Dona decided to create and carry their own line of men's clothing.

"It was actually the economic slump that actually made us decide to pull out the high-end brands we carried and introduce our own line instead," says Dona.

Tiongson and Dona also used to carry women's clothes and accessories, but decided to concentrate on men's fashion.

"We think that the local market for women's clothes is already saturated and is very competitive, so we decided it's high time to concentrate on men's," says Dona.

Retaining the name "Novecento," or "19th century" in Italian, the enterprising duo are braving the odds of fashion design and manufacturing, targeting college students and the yuppies with their high-quality yet affordable clothes' line. "We found the name in an Italian magazine. 'Novecento' embodies our clothes' line since we border on the classic," says Dona.

Edgy and classic

Novecento's clothes are both edgy and classic. Tiongson aptly puts it this way: "Our clothes are smooth and sophisticated, with a touch of risk."

Long-sleeve round-necks are a staple stand-alone. But the wearer may add a rugged edge by layering it underneath a collared shirt with front pockets.

Novecento's shirts are not too "club-wear" for the average taste—its colors and prints are not too loud, but they are not that tame as to make you get lost in the crowd, either.

During the recent launch, stripes and plains dominated the shirts, while khakis and blue denims were ubiquitous in the pants.

"But when you come into our shops, the first thing you'll notice is the wide variety of colors that we have," says Dona.

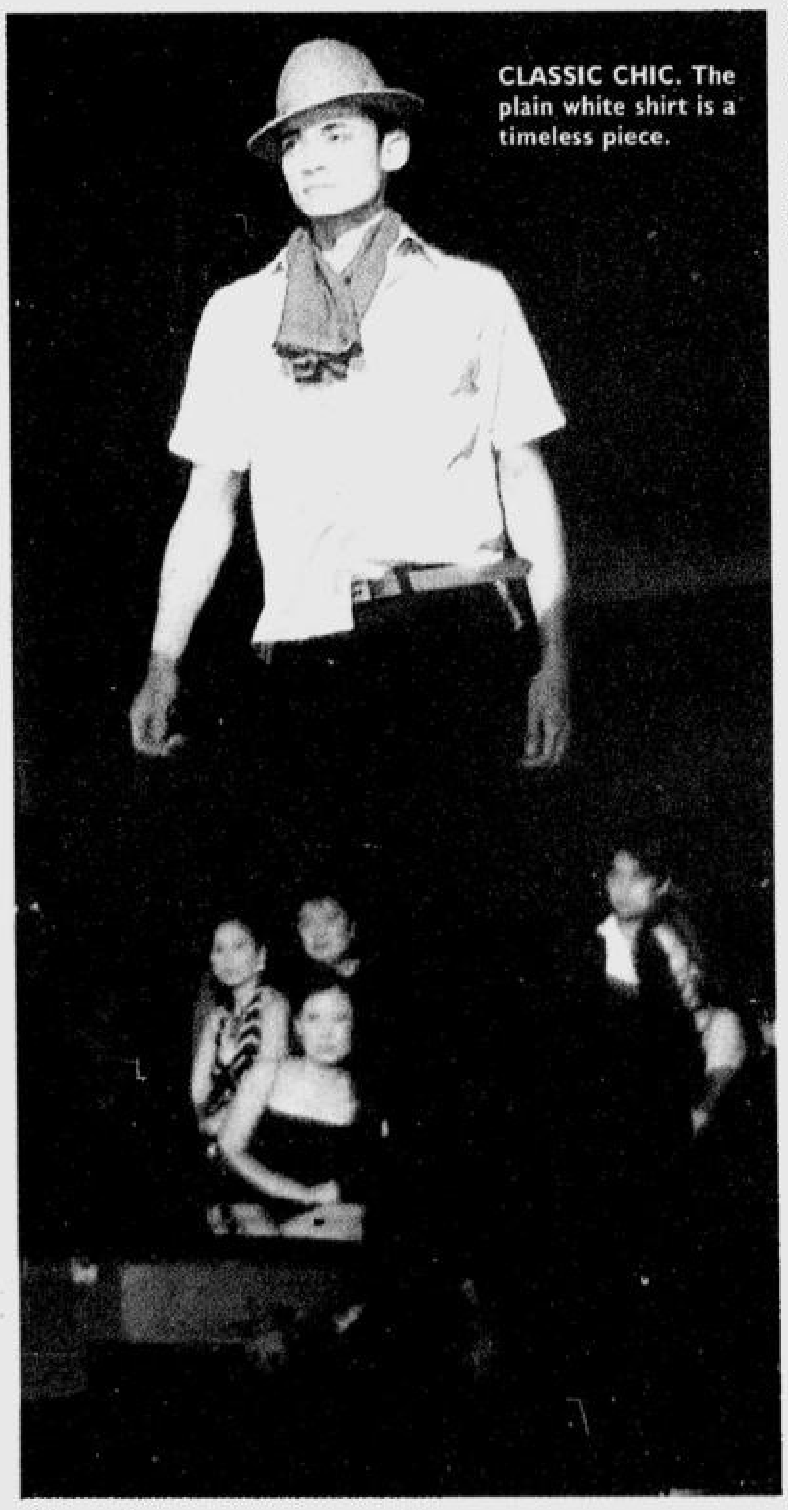
Big men need not worry since Novecento's clothes may also come in bigger than average sizes.

Novecento's shirts are reasonably priced at P650-P850, while pants range from P900-P1,200. Jackets, which will be seen around the end of the month, cost P2,000-P2,500. Dona says Novecento uses only high-quality fabrics imported from abroad.

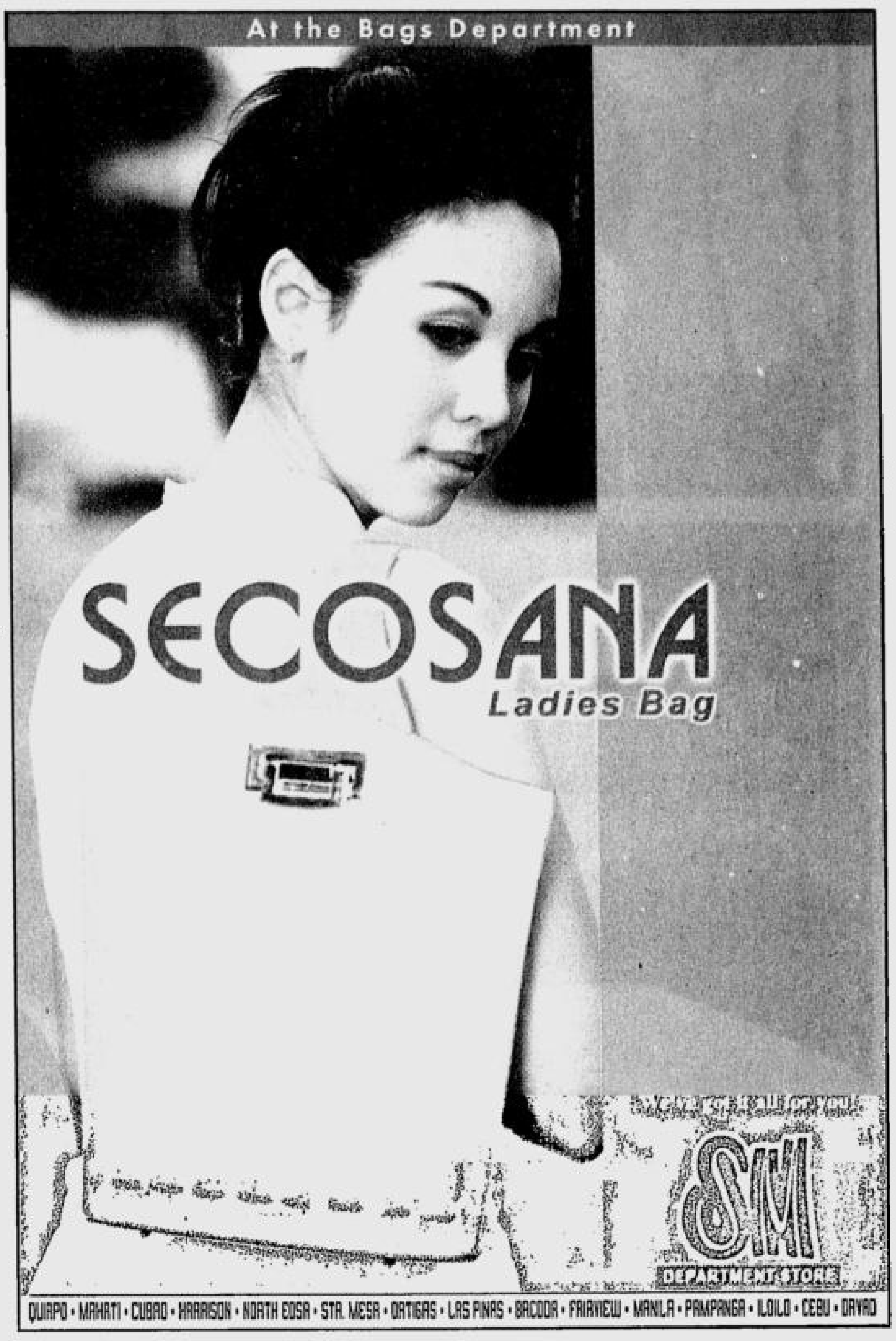
Soon to follow are men's accessories. A leather collection of bags, wallets and belts will be introduced next year.

With Novecento around, men definitely have more and better choices other than high-end brands that burn holes in the pockets and cheap imitations in the *tiangge*.

Novecento's shops are located at the 3/L Glorietta 2, G/F Greenbelt 1, and 3/L Shoppesville Arcade in Greenhills.



CLASSIC CHIC. The plain white shirt is a timeless piece.



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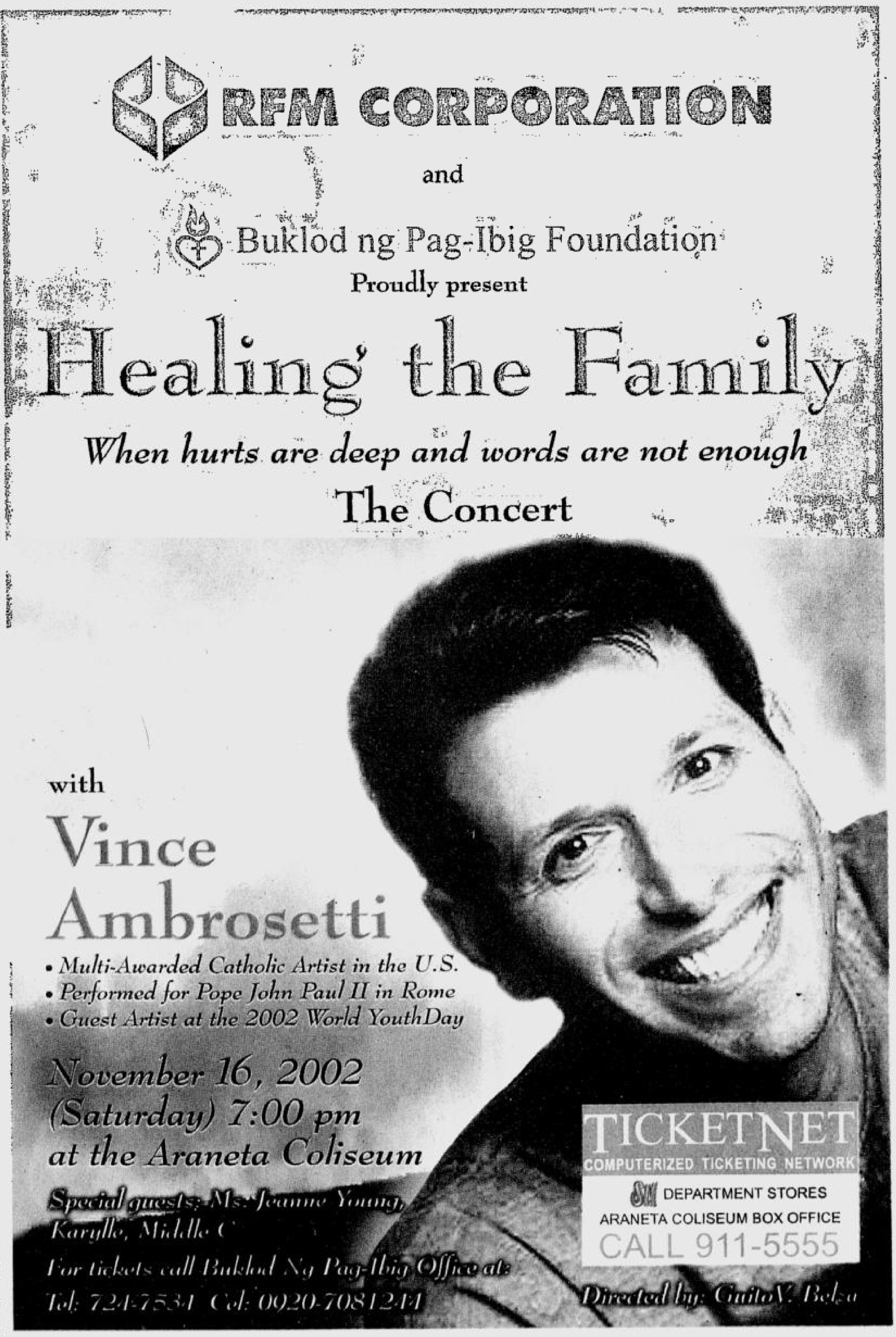

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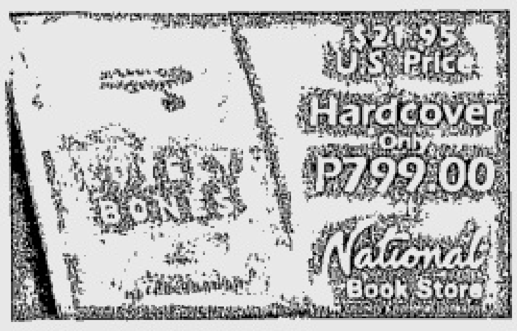
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FRESH. The newly refurbished Suitables boutique on the ground floor of Glorietta 1

Novel as ever

Text by Cheche V. Moral
Photos by Chito Vecina

SUCCESSFUL. That, by all measures, is Bobby Novenario as a designer and businessman.

With 18 outlets for his best-selling ready-to-wear line spread all over the metro and nearby Cavite, one would think by now he'd be taking things easy, content on delegating tasks to the 150 people in his employ.

"There are times when I vow to just stay

NOVEL/ p.E2

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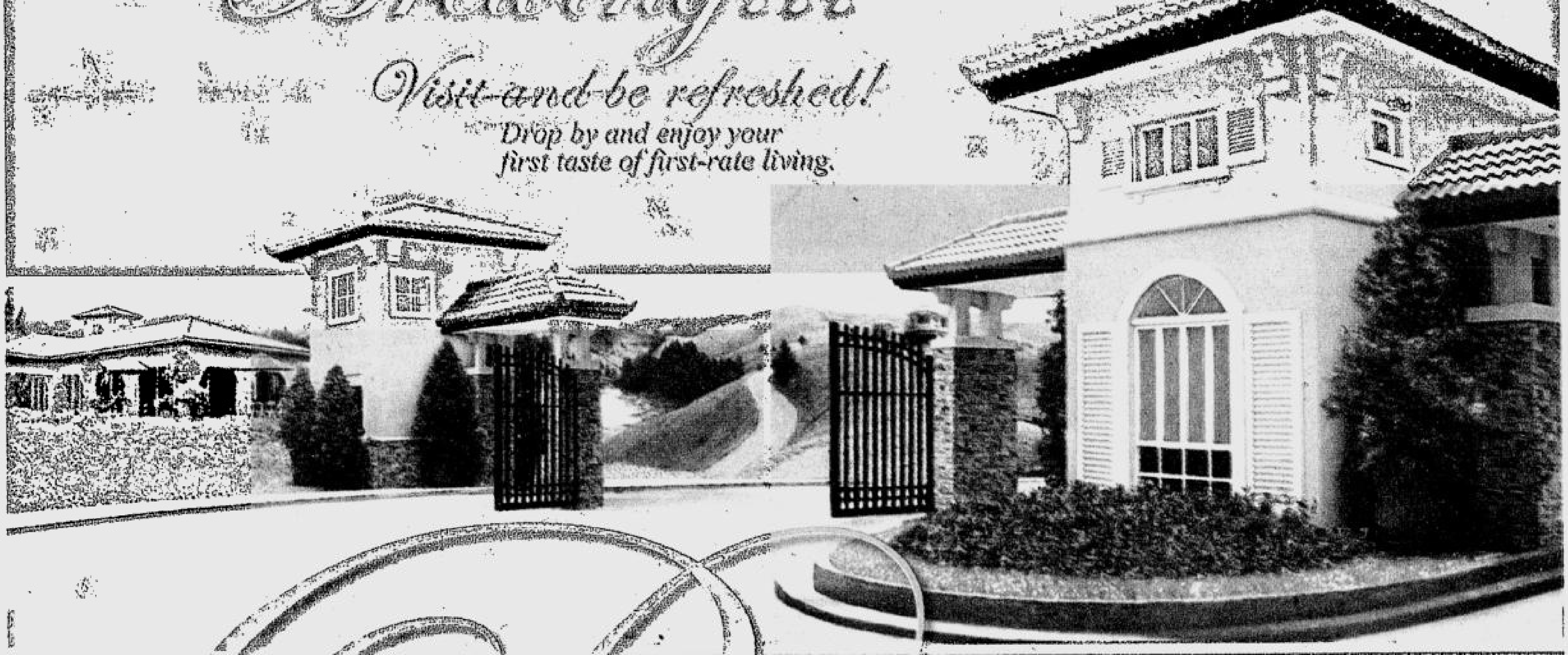

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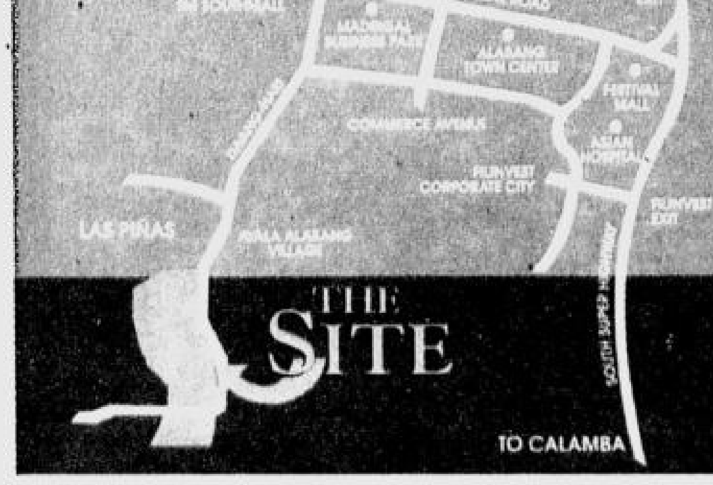
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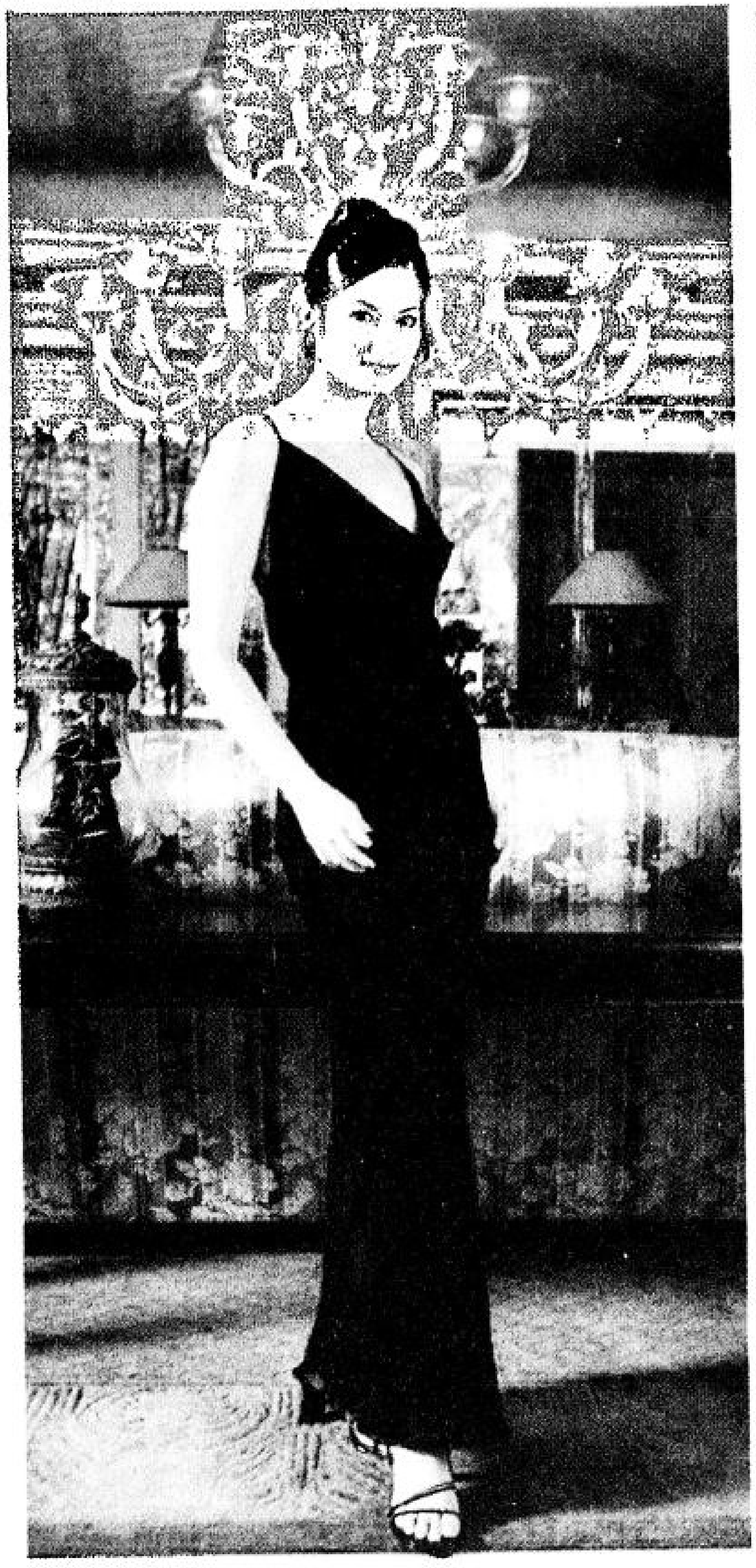
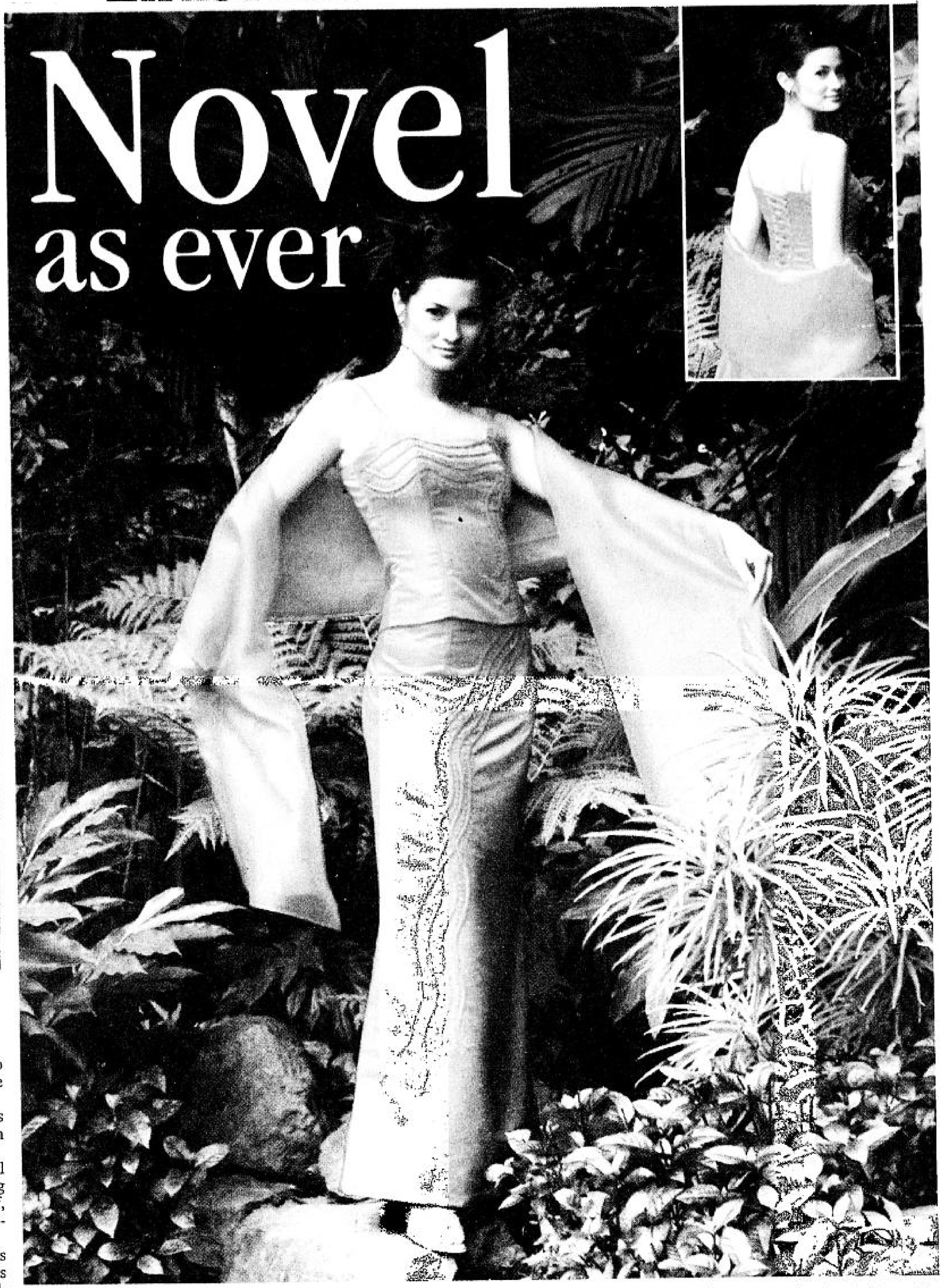


BEWITCH. Black beaded evening gown with cowl neckline and scoop back



CORDED PASSION. Two-piece bright-orange satin gown with matching shawl. The noodle-strapped top has crisscrossing corset-like fastening at the back.

Nearly 30 years after introducing his fast-selling RTW line, Bobby Novenario's vision remains fresh and creative

From page E1

home and tinker in my garden," Novenario says, "but I get restless. I end up doing the rounds of the shops and the factory."

No design goes into his shops without his stamp of approval, and he follows through down to the ledger.

"I'm very hands-on," says the former Wall Street broker. "I do my own fabric sourcing abroad. I have to see the merchandise myself, even if it means walking on muddy backstreets. It's part of the business."

Novenario's Suitables line, which carries casuals, separates and business suits, now has five outlets, while his eponymous label for wedding ensembles and formals has 13 freestanding and shop-in-shop branches. Both labels have been consistent best-sellers since he launched them at SM Makati almost three decades ago.

Updated look

Novenario shows no signs of slowing down.

"Business for me is like playing mahjong. I enjoy it. It's so fulfilling when people can relate to [your work] and start buying it," he says.

Recently he started renovating his stores for an updated and more cosmopolitan look. The first to get a makeover was his Suitables shop in Glorietta 1.

For the planning and execution, Novenario gave free rein to architect-friend Joey Yupangco.

"He got rid of the display window and made use of woodwork," Novenario says. Painted in off-white monochrome, the store's new look is modern and uncluttered. "It is similar to the upscale boutiques you see in big cities abroad."

As the Glorietta branch had to close shop for two months to finish construction, work on the other stores will have to wait until after the holidays.

"Eventually, all my shops will carry the same look," Novenario says.

Challenges

Even a flourishing business has its share of challenges.

A retailer, he says, must appeal to a mass market. "It doesn't follow that when your designs are beautiful and up-to-the-minute, people will buy them. Violet is in now, but if people can't relate to it..."

Though always willing to take risks, Novenario makes sure his stores carry "runners," or old reliable pieces that never fail to do well. "Our look has always been classic. But we make sure to update the details and fabrics."

For the much-favored romantic look, Novenario's design team adopted some elements to suit even the older market and those with physical imperfections.

"We follow the trend," he says, "but we just pick out the essence. [The trick] is not to go to extremes."

He says it is the market that dictates the design, so a designer must draw the line between what he likes and what the market likes.

"You must be sensitive enough to follow the taste of the market," he advises. "I personally like the works of some European designers, and I suggest them to friends, but I can't inject those to the clothes that we sell. That's not our main concern."

Paying his due

Competitive pricing, Novenario adds, is a big factor in his labels' popularity. Deeply religious and an active parish lay minister, he has a healthy attitude toward competition.

"If you give income to your country, pay the right taxes and the right salaries, you're an asset," he says.

Some of his store personnel started as part of his household staff. Now 150-strong, many of his employees have been with him since the start.

His success, he adds, is the product of blood, sweat and tears. "Things didn't happen overnight."

The UP Statistics graduate worked on Wall Street for some time before he finally decided to give up his green card and make his mark in Philippine fashion.

In 1975, he won the Ramon Valera Award for Most Promising Designer. "That got me started," he recalls.

With no formal training in design, he relied on self-study to hone his craft. "I used to go up narrow, rickety stairs to show my samples to SM... If I'd get an order, it didn't mean the fabric was still available," he says.

"I think I'm 70 percent a businessman and 30 percent a designer. [Designing] is not just putting things together; you must understand the business," he explains.

Novenario says he has new ventures in mind, like putting up Suitables for franchise, but he refuses to clutter himself at the moment. "I've been asked to lend my name to an accessories line, but I'd rather not. If I were to have an accessories label, I'd like to have complete control over it."

While Novenario observes others are good in diversification, specialization suits him fine. "For now, I'd like to concentrate on what we do best."

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SUITABLES IS LOCATED AT GLORIETTA 1, SM NORTH EDSA, SM MEGAMALL, SM SOUTHMALL, AND AT THE BOUTIQUE SQUARE OF SM MEGAMALL

RED HOT. Asymmetric-sleeved gown with beaded bodice and matching wrap

INTOXICATE. Beaded champagne evening gown with shawl

Healing rally set at Cuneta Astrodome

GOINGS ON

THE PINAGPALANG Kamay Healing Ministry of Fr. Corsie S. Legaspi will sponsor an annual healing rally on Nov. 16, 1-7 p.m., at the Cuneta Astrodome, Pasay City. Admission is free. Father Legaspi will be the main celebrant of the Eucharistic celebration and will give the welcome address. A procession inside the Astrodome in honor of Mary, Health of the Sick will precede the Mass, and end with her enthronement at the altar. A healing session for all the sick present in the Astrodome will be the final part of the program.

ART COMPETITION. The Art Discovery and Learning Foundation Inc. and the Rotary Club of Makati-Pasong Tamo (R.I. District 3830) will hold an art competition dubbed, "On-the-Spot Drawing and Painting Contest," for students, out-of-school youths and teachers, on Nov. 16, 8 a.m.-12 nn, at the Quirino Grandstand, Rizal Park. Registration of contestants is until before Nov. 16 at Rotary Club of Makati-Pasong Tamo, through Crag, Caballes, Jamora and Somera Law Offices, 2/F The Plaza Royale, 120 LP Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City; 14-A Maalalahanin St., Teachers' Village, QC; or at the contest venue on Nov. 16, 7-8 a.m. Call Fernando B. Sena at 924-6425 or 925-8801; Benjie Somera at 812-5246 to 48; or Jimmy Navarro at 631-4921.

SALE. The public is invited to a pre-Christmas bazaar on: Nov. 11-15, 16-17, 25-29 and Dec. 9-13 at the LKG Tower, Ayala Avenue, Makati City. Gift items at bargain prices will be on sale in time for Christmas. Call 922-2272, fax 435-5727.

LITERACY FORUM. The Reading Association of the Phils. marks its 30th anniversary with a free literacy forum on Nov. 14, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., at Aurora A. Quezon Elementary School, San Andres, Malate. Call 425-1409 or RAP Secretary Esperanza J. Chee Kee at 455-9133, or text Prof. Ramero Royo at (0917) 794-0726.

SEMINAR. The Screenprinting & Imaging Graphics of the Phils. will sponsor "The Management Screenprinting in Asia Pacific 2002" at the Amorsolo Ballroom, Manila Galleria Suites, on Nov. 16, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Call the Secretariat at 712-3312/3316.

AWARD. The First Global Heroes Award, named after American First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, will be given to Filipina Marietta Primicias-Goco Philippines at the Microcredit Summit in New York City on Nov. 11, 7-9 p.m., at the Hilton Hotel, under the auspices of the Stone Soup Leadership Institute. Presenting the award will be Trude Lash and David Woolner of the Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt Foundation.

PHOTO COURSE. The last basic photo course for this year is on Nov. 10 at the Yslas Restaurant, Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila. Call 843-5341/813-7420.

BOOK FAIR. The Association of Booksellers for the Academe and the Professions, with the Liceo de Cagayan University, will hold the 3rd Cagayan de Oro book fair on Nov.12-15 with the theme "Books: Keys to Creativity and Development."

BAZAAR. Heaven Sent: The Lifestyle Bazaar will open on Nov.16-17 at the Manila Polo Club. Call (632)812-9405 or e-mail heavensentbazaar @aol.com.

NATIONAL CONGRESS. The Philippine Librarians Association Inc. 2002 officers and members of the board of trustees, and the NCAA-National Committee on Librarians and Information Services will hold the "National Congress on the Emergent Roles of Librarians and Other Information Professionals in National Development" on Nov. 27-29 at the Holiday Inn, United Nations corner Maria Orosa Street, Ermita, Manila. Call 526-8295/0217or 740-9709 (telefax).

GENERAL MEETING. The Andanians (Pangasinan) Association Inc., an organization of natives of Anda, Pangasinan, residing in Metro Manila and nearby provinces, will hold a general membership meeting on Nov. 9 at 13 Pittsburg St., Cubao, QC. To be discussed in the meeting is the annual Christmas party on Dec. 14 at the Camp Crame, QC. Also to be taken up is a medical-dental mission to be conducted by the UP-PGH early next year. Call Jessie Panit at 912-0511, 913-2373; Rose Calicdan, 461-4063; Loreto Racuya, 805-8153; Harry Cativo, 527-8421; or Eli Canta, (046) 571-0001 and (0917) 242-6496.

PHOTO CONTEST. The "Wedding at the Fort" on-the-spot photo contest will be held on Nov. 23, 8 a.m.-6 p.m., at the Fort Santiago, Intramuros, Manila. Contest participants are not allowed to bring their own models and wedding gowns. Participants can use only Kodak Pro Image 100 or Kodak Supra 400 35mm color negative film purchased from FPPF, and print only on Kodak Professional Supra 8 paper of Kodak Metallic 8 paper. Interested parties can call FPPF, 7/F Comfoods Building, Sen. Gil Puyat corner Chino Roces Avenues, Makati City, tel. 843-5341/813-7420, c/o Amil de Castro and Beverly Estrasas.

ACTIVITIES. This month, get a chance to meet and hang out with Garfield as he tours Robinsons Dream Centers across Metro Manila. Garfield will visit Dreamscape in Robinsons Galleria on Nov. 10, 17 and 24. He will also be at Dream Zone in Robinsons Place Imus, Robinsons Place Manila and Robinsons Starmills, Pampanga on Nov. 9, 16 and 26, respectively.

DINNER-DANCE. The Guagua Bato-Balani Club will hold its traditional dinner-dance on Dec. 24 at the GNC quadrangle. Peter Syke S. Pineda, Bato-Balani Club supremo for 2002, is inviting friends and Guaguaeños to the party.

EXHIBIT. The 10th Taiwan Products & Technology will be held from Nov. 28 to Dec. 1 at the World Trade Center. Call Tai at 687-1551/17; Expotrade: 895-5735/2392.

BAZAAR. The Zonta Club of Makati will hold its annual charity bazaar on Nov. 10 at the multipurpose hall of the Sanctuario de San Antonio Parish in Forbes Park, Makati City. The bazaar will showcase a variety of exciting products such as Italian shoes, Tibetan furniture and jewelry, as well as gourmet food selections. Simultaneously, free breast cancer consultations and screenings will be given by premiere breast cancer surgeon/specialist Dr. Diana Cua. One hundred free mammograms will be given to interested parties, courtesy of Makati Medical Center, Cua Bang Foundation and Agfa film. The proceeds will be used for the club's socio-civic projects, among them are the Psychological Center for Sexually Abused Children in Marillac Hills and feeding programs for malnourished children in the National Capitol Region.

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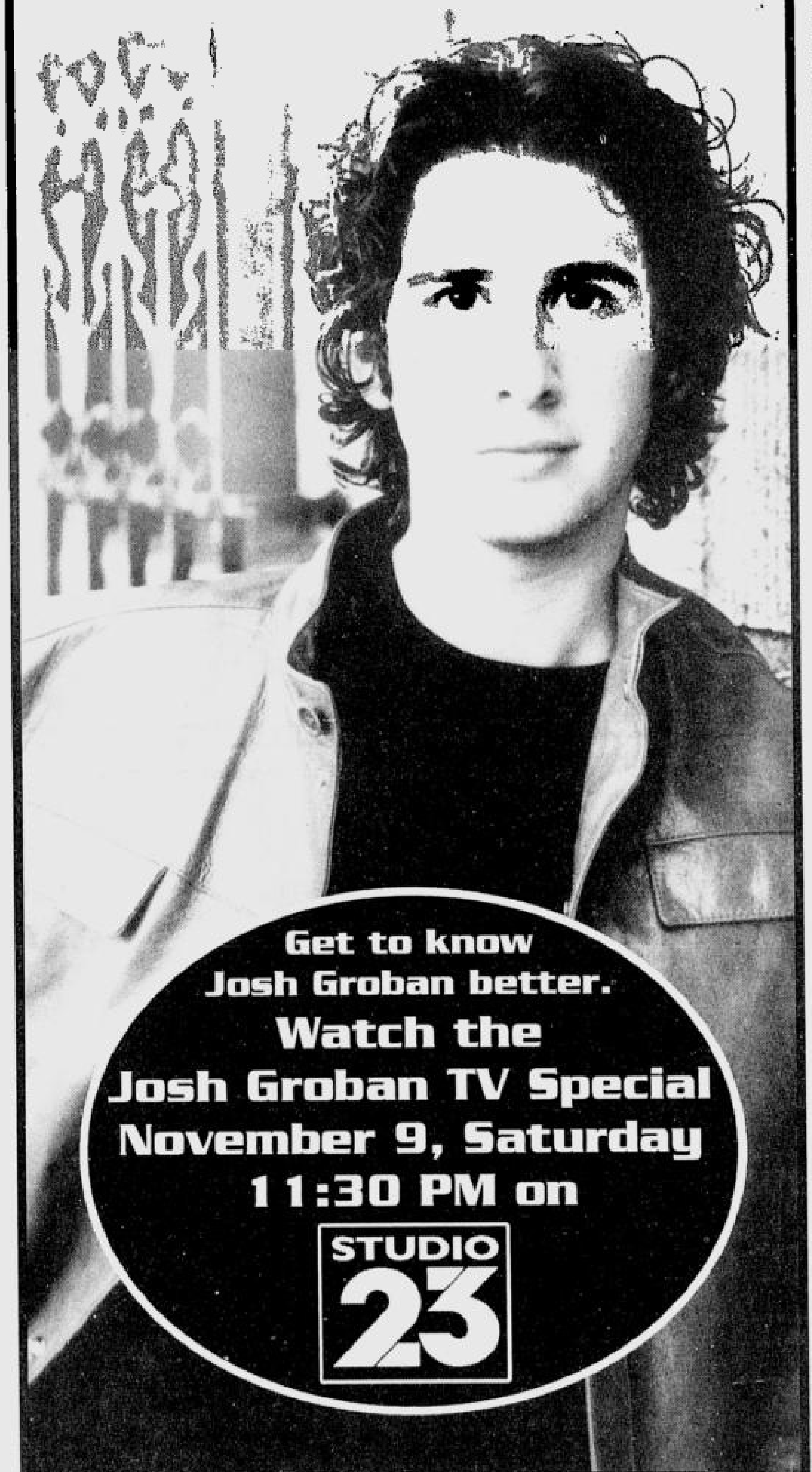

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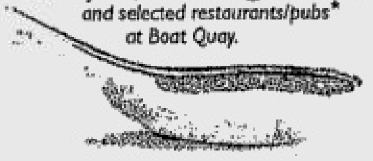

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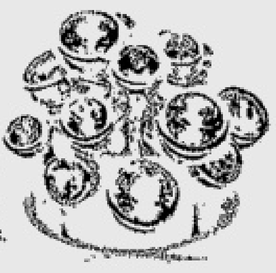

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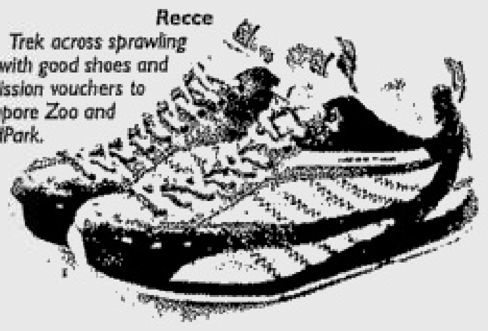

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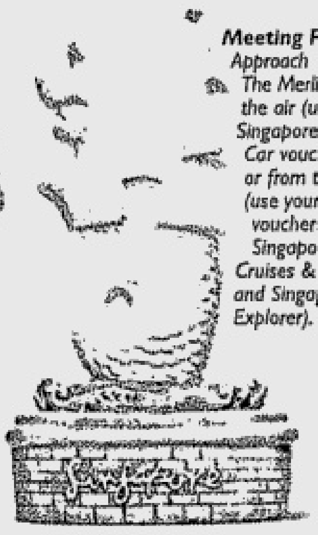

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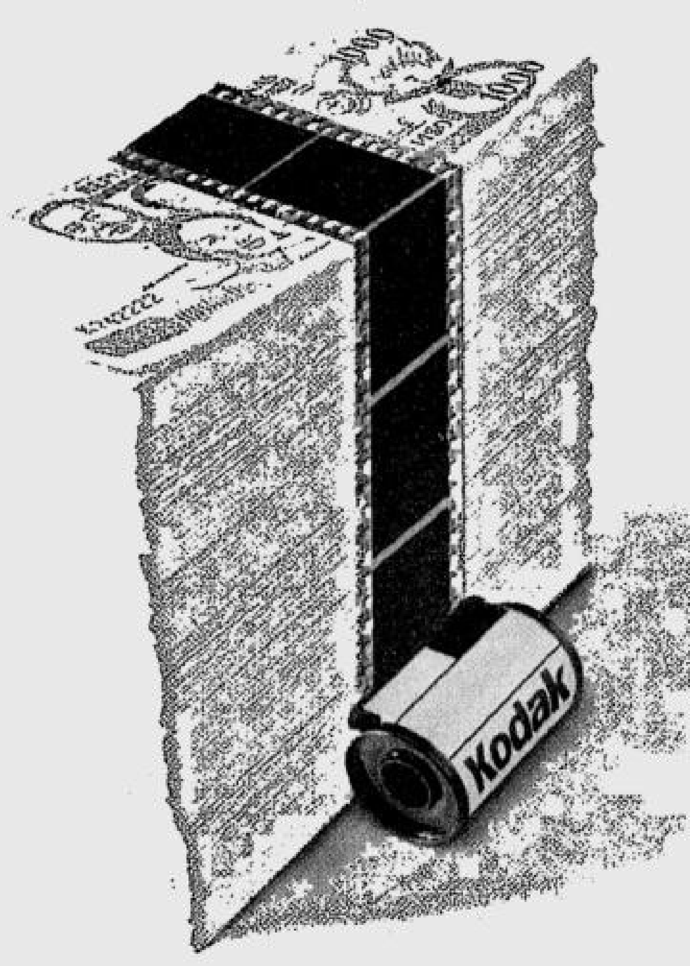

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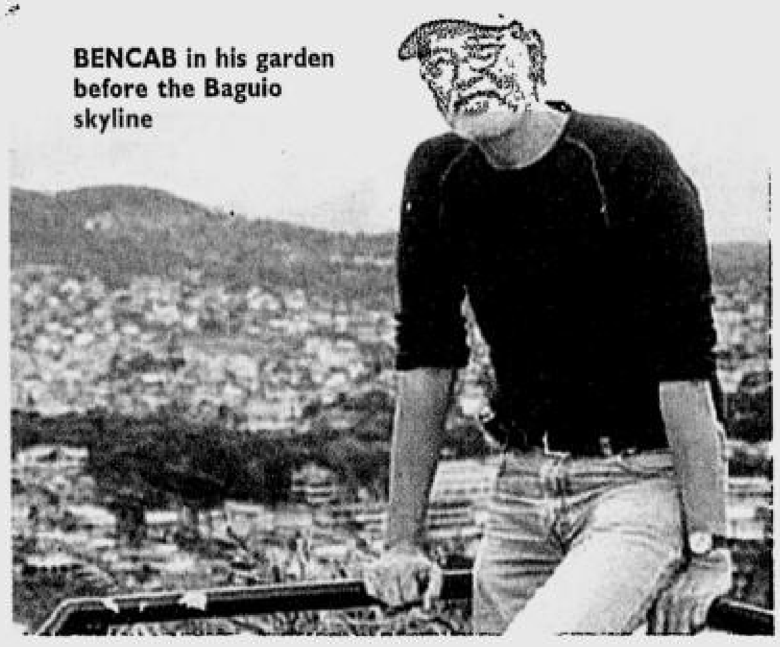

BENCAB in his garden before the Baguio skyline

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"Teenager? You must mean my daughters! With Imedeen, my skin's smooth even without make-up."
Joanna Valencia-de Jesus,
33, AVP for Finance, interior design student,
mother of two
Joanna de Jesus has the fresh face of a college girl -- plus a successful career and not one but two teenaged daughters! Yet you'd never guess it from her skin: "People can't believe I'm 33!" Thanks to Imedeen, Joanna's not only maintained her young skin -- she's even *improved* it: "I wasn't born with perfect skin. I had sunspots and tiny veins, but they're almost gone; now I don't even need foundation!" Only Imedeen nourishes skin from deep within -- for a smooth, firm, defiantly youthful complexion *without* time consuming rituals. So when her daughters' friends or her own classmates are amazed at her age, Joanna just smiles and says "Believe it -- and believe Imedeen." Imedeen. The Skin Care Tablet.

Ultrasound images of the skin structure: First photo shows photodamaged dermis; second photo shows denser structure which implies better support and ability to hold moisture.
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IMEDEEN
The Skin Care Tablet

Baguio, as designed by Bencab

IF travel advisories work, Baguio is one place in this "terrorist"-infested country the First World (which is also terrorist-infested, by the way) citizens will miss out on. It'll be their loss, as much as it is ours.

As cars were headed back down to Manila Sunday afternoon after the long holiday, we were driving up to Baguio for a long work ahead, to do a magazine shoot of **Bencab**'s studio/home/garden to mark the launch of the coffee-table book "Bencab" published by **Manolo** and **Maritess Lopez**.

It turned out to be the finest working holiday we've had in a long time, thanks to Bencab's Baguio. We've never seen this mountain city the way Bencab has defined it.

LIFE-STYLED

Thelma Sioson San Juan

> We discover many layers to the man and newer layers to the place. With the infamous travel advisory, this mountain city is the world's loss

Bencab, who's among our foremost artists and whose works are so in demand no matter the state of the art market, has lived in Baguio since his return in 1985 from London. His studio on the mountaintop is a favorite destination of friends and colleagues, and makes a photogenic spread on glossies and dailies.

Of course, Baguio the city, particularly Session Road, cuts a depressing sight today. Even in the evening, as you drive into the city, you're assailed by the smell of diesel fumes and run into traffic.

The city remains congested, polluted, unplanned. It could be going fast, and with it, the untainted memory of many a childhood.

But then you have artists like Bencab, Manila-born and -raised, who hang on to the precious solitude and romance this mountain resort can still give.

Ducking its hustle and bustle, they have appropriated certain spaces in the mountain that give them not only the privacy of home but also the quiet stimulus to an artist's creative process. Baguio remains their shield from Metro Manila and what it represents.

Bencab's home/studio is a high-ceilinged concrete structure that opens out onto his multi-tiered garden he's carved through the years. His sliding doors lead onto his garden of bonsai, where his dwarf *balete*, *molave*, among other trees, provide him his morning ritual.

He begins his day pruning them, coaxing them into his desired shapes, as they take their place alongside wooden highland-god sculptures and stone sculptures, some of which he himself has created. We've always known about Bencab's bonsai garden.

What surprised us was his garden farther down the mountain—tiers of rough stonewalls built by his Ifugao team without the use of cement (a classic engineering feat mastered by the race that built the rice terraces), with different kinds of bamboos, ferns, bromeliads and flowering plants, and a pond. On the high vantage spot stands an Ifugao hut.

From this sloping garden, you feast on the

BAGUIO/ p.F4

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Pechay Wombok TLC PRICE P17.00/kg.
DOLE Tropical Gold Pineapple TLC PRICE P37.00/pc. Reg. Price 42.00
MONTEREY
BEEF ROLL WITH HERBED CHEESE STUFFING
Ingredients:

1 kilo	MONTEREY BEEF TOP ROUND sliced thinly into 4" x 5" squares	1/2 tsp.	thyme
		4 pcs.	PUREFOODS Honey Cured Bacon
		20 pcs.	spinach leaves, blanched
1 tsp.	salt	1/3 cup	MAGNOLIA Gold Butter
1 tsp.	pepper	3 tbsp.	all-purpose flour
2 tbsp.	garlic	1 cup	beef broth
3 tbsp.	vinegar	2 tbsp.	LEA & PERRINS Worcestershire Sauce
1 tbsp.	rosemary		
1 cup	MAGNOLIA Cream Cheese, softened	2 tbsp.	red wine
		1/2 cup	cream
1/2 tsp.	sage		

Procedure:
Rub meat with salt, pepper, garlic, vinegar and rosemary. Marinate for at least 30 minutes.
In a bowl, mix cream cheese, sage and thyme until well blended. Arrange bacon and spinach leaves on one end of the beef, covering at least one third of the beef fillet. Spread cheese mixture on top of the spinach and roll. Secure with toothpicks and tie with a string.
In a pan, melt butter over high heat and sear beef all over until brown. Transfer in a baking dish and bake in a pre-heated 350°F oven for 25 minutes or until done. Using the same pan and butter, whisk in flour to make a smooth paste. Add in broth little by little until smooth. Blend in remaining ingredients and simmer until thick.
When beef is done, slice and serve with prepared gravy and buttered vegetables.
Makes 6 to 8 servings.
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MEDITATION Area: A Quiet Hideaway, designed by Anna Bautista, Rudy Olaso and Gil Obispo Santos

CORNER bedroom connecting a patio, designed by Jane dela Paz, Stella Sowy and Marivi Paz Occasiones

BATH Spa Showcase, designed by Joy Ejercito, Marja Corcuera and Joyce Forbes

Interior design exhibit marks PIID's 38th year

HOME Zone at Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati, hosted recently "My Place of Solitude," an interior design exhibit marking the 38th anniversary of the Philippine Institute of Interior Designers (PIID).

The exhibit featured five interior design showcases using various pieces from the Ayala Center home stores. A den had an eclectic mix of furniture and accessories: a bookshelf with a built-in lamp shade, an antique backdrop for the classic lounge chair in genuine leather, accent pillows in magenta, electric blue, black, emerald green and red, to add color to a basically neutral background. The candle condo served as a decorative rack on the side. A huge bird cage, plants, water fountain and carved antique wooden pedestals were also featured.

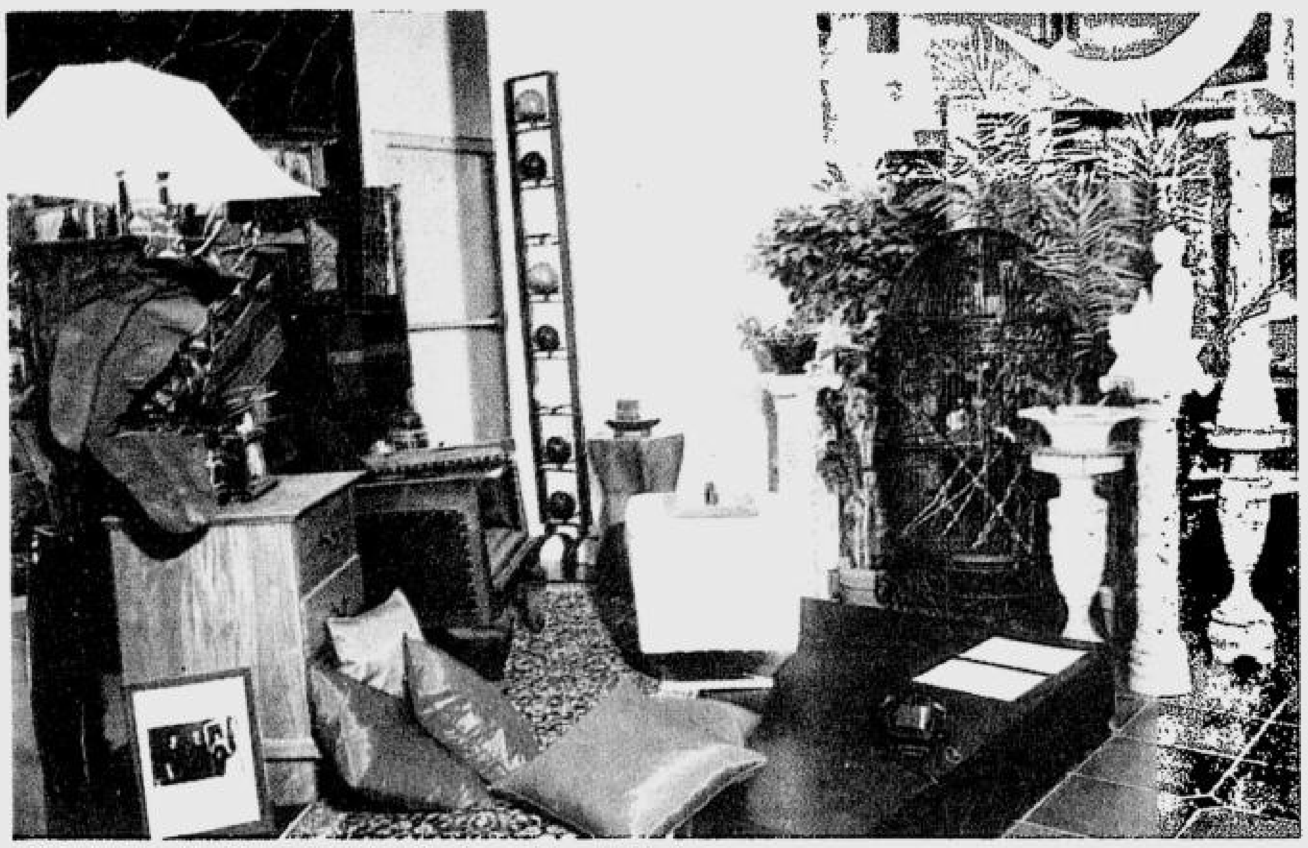
LANAI, designed by Hannah Acab-Faustino, Louie Briones and Maru Montealegre

Personal space was what the lanai was about. Familiar Philippine pieces were used, like the *duyan*-inspired lounge chair, abaca woven mats, *banig* pillows and other native accessories. There were Bo Bo baskets fishermen use, *palayok* clay pots and even an old flat iron.

A corner bedroom spot connected to a patio was decorated to give the illusion of being close to nature, which meant fresh air and the use of natural woods, cascading waterfalls, plants, pebble and stones.

The bath spa showcase had a spiritual ambience, with the bath treated like a retreat for rejuvenation, release of energy, relaxation and re-energizing one's self. There's a side table where one can have fruits and wine. White sand was used as flooring, instead of tiles. Candles, incense, floor lamps, colored bottles and tree branches with hanging plants and *capiz* ball lights completed the scene. The meditation corner has soft lighting and sheer fabrics.

Home Zone is located at the 3/L, Glorietta 4, Ayala Center.



DEN, designed by Toni Gabriel, Celyn Imperial and Fely Ang

Exhibit/sale showcases versatility of ferns

THE FERN and Nature Society of the Philippines celebrates its 20th anniversary with a grand exhibit/sale titled "The Versatility of the Fern," at the Manila Seedling Bank Foundation, Edsa corner Quezon Avenue, Quezon City. The invitational opening is on Nov. 13, and the exhibit will be open on Nov. 14-24.

Guests of hónor for the ribbon-cutting ceremonies will be Gretchen O. Cojuangco and MSBF general manager Chito Bertol. Various garden and specialty clubs have signified participation: Philippine Horticulture Society Inc., Philippine Bonsai Society Inc., Natural Stone Society of the Philippines, Philippine Orchid Society, Cactus and Succulent Society, King Louie Farms, Anihan Garden, Philippine Fish Association, Birds of Robert Puentespina and Los Baños Orchids.

The commercial section will carry a vast array of plants, ware and garden items. Expect a lot of commercial vendors who will cater to the needs of garden lovers. Among the early booth takers are King Louie Farms, Anihan Garden, Genesis Flowers, Vangie Go, Rex Puentespina, Vic Chin, Valesol Haven, VS Orchids, Ramgo Intl. Corp., Mabuhay Orchids, Brenda Villanueva and Delia Pionera.

Offered free to the public are lecture-demos on interesting topics showing ferns in myriad ways. The topics are: Landscaping by Shirley Sanders (Nov. 14); Fern Culture by Nonie Dolera (Nov. 15); Butterfly by Linda Robledo (Nov. 16); Cooking with Ferns, Weeds and Plants by Maur Lichauco (Nov. 17); Ikebana by Joyce Kato (Nov. 18); Culture and Care of Koi by Mike Fernandez (Nov. 19); Flower Arrangement by Tony Padilla (Nov. 20); Breeding and Care of Birds by Robert Puentespina (Nov. 21); Suiseki by Fely S. Gupit (Nov. 22); and Orchid Culture by Helen Valmayor (Nov. 23).

The members of the Fern and Nature Show 2002 Committee are: Rodolfo "Oding" Reyes, president of FNSPI, physical arrangement and overall chair of the show; Mameng Florento and Tess Angliongto, chair and co-chair, commercial section; Dory S. Bernabe and Flor Tarriela, ways and means; Nonie Dolera, judging and awards; George Yao, education and lecture; Vicky Valle, registration; Baby Doble, souvenir program; Dory S. Bernabe, ribbon-cutting; Melrose Ocaya, Inday Petines and Helen Mayo for socials, cocktails and invitations; Siony Ng, ticketing; Ina Conejero, appreciation dinner; Butch Duque, security; Fely S. Gupit, publicity; Greg Alvior and Dario Logmao, directors; and PJ Nepomuceno, show adviser.

THE PLATYCERIUM Grande (Staghorn fern) is a tender, tropical fern found wild in tropical Asia, Malaya, Java, Madagascar, Australia and Africa. They have two kinds of fronds, with the fertile spore bearing fronds measuring 18 inches to 3 ft long, flat narrow at the base and spread out widely at the tips, where they are divided deeply, resembling antlers of a stag or elk, hence the name Staghorn fern.

MEMBERS of the executive committee: Carmen Florento, Oding Reyes, Marly Dolera, Flor Tarriela, Dory Bernabe, Belen and Bert Ocampo; (seated) Nonie Dolera.

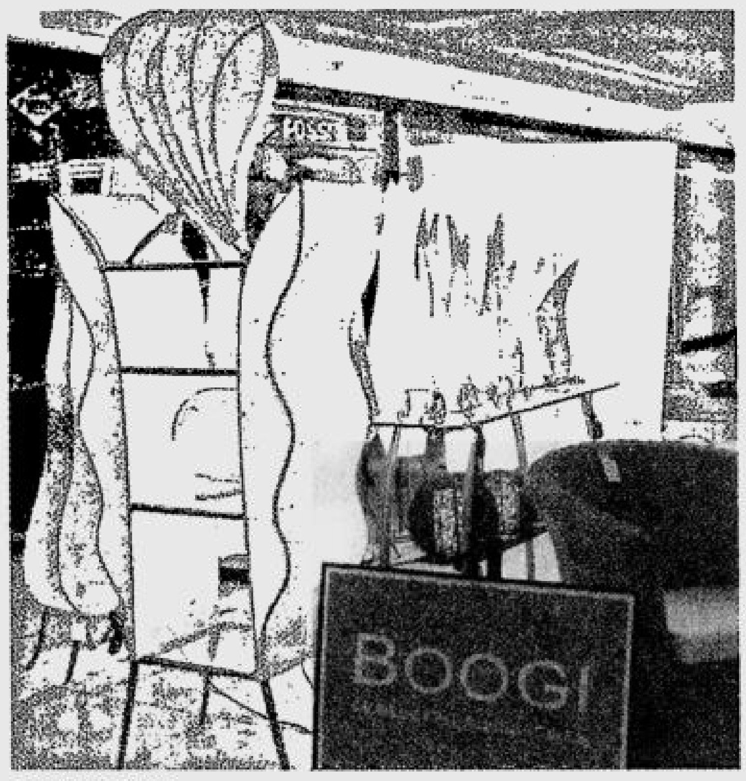
Furnishing and decor fair at Enterprise

MY HOME magazine marked its 2nd anniversary with Finds, a furnishing and decor fair that featured a collection of stylish and meticulously crafted furniture and decor items at Glorietta 4.

A second Finds Fair will be held Nov. 27-29, 3/L, Tower 2 lobby of The Enterprise Center on Ayala Ave., Makati.

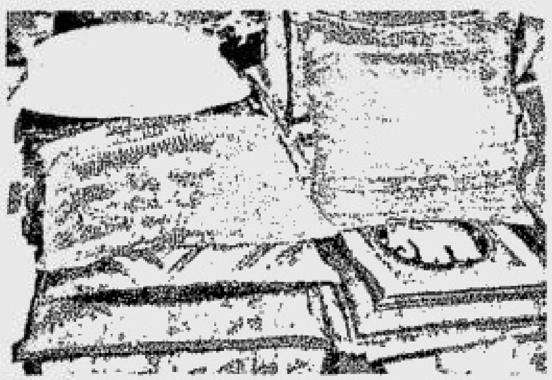
Among the pieces displayed in the first Finds were planter and picture frame speakers from Dai-ichi, home furniture from JB Woodcraft, Patina, Modern Design, Cancio and Union Square; home accessories and decors from exhibitors like Modern Naturals, Mano Mano, Sifra Arts and Craft, Azcor Lighting, Cornerstone and Boogi Philippines.

My Home is published by Mega Magazines and Publications Inc. (MMPI) in partnership with Earth + Style Corporation. Get a copy at major bookstores and newsstands nationwide.



DISTINCTIVELY designed dividers, shelves and lamps from Boogi

DAI-ICHI planter speakers



SIFRA Arts and Crafts throw pillows in vibrant colors make perfect picks among a collection of items from India, Vietnam and Thailand

Plant art seminar-workshops at seedling bank

A SERIES of seminar-workshops on various plant arts will be conducted by plant art expert Serapion S. Metilla at Mett's Plant Art Shop, King Louis Garden Center, Manila Seedling Bank compound, Edsa corner Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

People who want to enjoy and earn from gardening, especially urban residents, can learn bonsai culture, tray landscaping or dish gardening, Ikebana, flower arrangement and flower shop operation, terrarium-making and mini waterfall Zen garden, among others.

Bonsai culture, the art of dwarfing plants, has to be taken up in three sessions; Ikebana in 12 sessions, to earn a certificate from Japan; tray landscaping and terrarium-making, one session each; flower arrangement and flower shop operation, five sessions; and mini waterfall Zen garden, three sessions.

Registration is now open. Call 939-4593 or (0917) 832-1352.

THE ANCIENT art called Zen, which was originated by the Zen Buddhist monks of China and Japan, was created to emphasize the balance of nature for a space of stillness and meditation. Believing in austerity, tranquility and simplicity, Zen gardening makes use of nature such as rocks, water, moss and other plants arranged in a natural landscape as what we see in the fields.

In the Gardens and Pets Show 2002, back-to-back with the Ethnic Food Fest, modern day Zen gardens will be displayed at the World Trade Center, Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City, from Nov. 22-24. Organized by the Center for International Trade Expositions and Missions (Citem), there will be daily lecture-demonstrations on urban gardening, recycling, and care of pets. One of the topics to be discussed by Serapion S. Metilla will be on Zen meditation garden and tray landscaping in mobile form specially designed for urban living. This will be on Nov. 22 at 3:30 p.m. On Nov. 23, Earl Kennedy will talk on ornamental fish, and on Nov. 24, the Cutflower and Ornamental Federation will discuss flowering pot plants and designing patio gardening for restaurants.

Call 831-1282/2201.

MINI waterfall Zen Garden

GREENPEACE enjoins the public to eat organic food to avoid health risks.

PHOTO BY ROGER CARPIO

Greenpeace issues consumer guide on 'modified' food

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda

DO YOU know what's in your food? That's the question Greenpeace Southeast Asia asks in its new streamers and leaflets. The leaflets are issued as part of the campaign to stop or slow down the spread of genetically engineered (GE) or genetically modified organisms (GMO) included in the food people eat daily.

Greenpeace is the worldwide organization that aggressively promotes public awareness about—and often act on—environmental issues and problems.

To emphasize its rejection of GMO foods, Greenpeace has published the "True Food Consumer Guide," which lists foods that have been tested for GMO content. These foods are grouped into three categories—green, orange and red.

Under the green list are manufacturers who guarantee via public statements or direct communication with Greenpeace that they do not use GE ingredients or additives in their products. Companies whose products are organic are in the green list.

The orange list includes manufacturers who have committed to phasing out within a year the use of GE ingredients and additives. If they fail to live up to their commitment by the specified time, they will automatically revert to the red list.

The red list includes food manufacturers who admit using and refuse to phase out GE ingredients or additives or have failed to respond to Greenpeace's calls. Also in the list are those who have not made any public statements regarding any plan to abandon use of those ingredients.

Of the 16 categories color-coded in the Guide, only five have green companies. These are baby food (7 Cereals Baby Meals, Gerber baby foods); cookies, biscuits (Rebisco Superstix); beverage (Fat & Thin Milky Soya Drink Natural Flavor, Lactasoy & Vitasoy Creamy Original); soya-based products (Back to Basics Naturally Organic); and oils (Marca Leon Corn Oil, Marca Leon Vegetable Oil, Magic Fry Pure Soya Bean Oil).

No guarantee of safety

Greenpeace has not found any convincing and conclusive evidence establishing the safety of GE foods for human consumption. It is encouraging consumers to work for a labeling law so the public may know whether or not GMO ingredients are included in the products sold in groceries and markets. Until now, there is no regulation in the Philippines that calls for mandatory labeling, segregation and traceability of GMO products and ingredients.

Greenpeace enjoins the public to buy and eat organic food to avoid risks to the health of man and the environment. It encourages people "to exercise their right to know and to say no" and to organize or participate in discussions on GMOs.

For this purpose, Greenpeace has teamed up with Organic Market, the first of its kind in Asia including the Philippines, which was started 10 years ago by Mara Pardo de Tavera. Organic foods are crops, fruits and vegetables grown without chemical fertilizers and cooked without the inclusion of GMOs.

Beau Baconguis, Greenpeace Southeast Asia campaigner, said the "True Food Consumer Guide" contains color-coded products according to brand and manufacturer. The list is not yet complete but it is being monitored and updated regularly.

While Greenpeace likes working on its own for most of its campaigns, every now and then it cooperates with a business organization or a non-government organization with similar environmental motivations, hence its partnership with the Organic Market, a firm that believes that organically grown produce is the healthiest to eat.

The Organic Market moved recently from Greenbelt to the former site of the Primavera Restaurant along Legazpi Street, Makati. It is open on Tuesday, Friday and Saturday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. It moves to Ayala Alabang on Thursdays.

E-mail the author at dorisnuyda@yahoo. com

Copies of the 'True Food Consumer Guide' may be obtained at the Greenpeace Southeast Asia office, Unit 329 Eagle Court Condominium, #26 Matalino St., Barangay Central, QC. Their e-mail is greenpeacephilippines@ dialb.greenpeace.org and website at wwwgreenpeacesouthasiaorg or wwgreenpeaceorg. Also call tel. 434-70-34/ 921-89-30.

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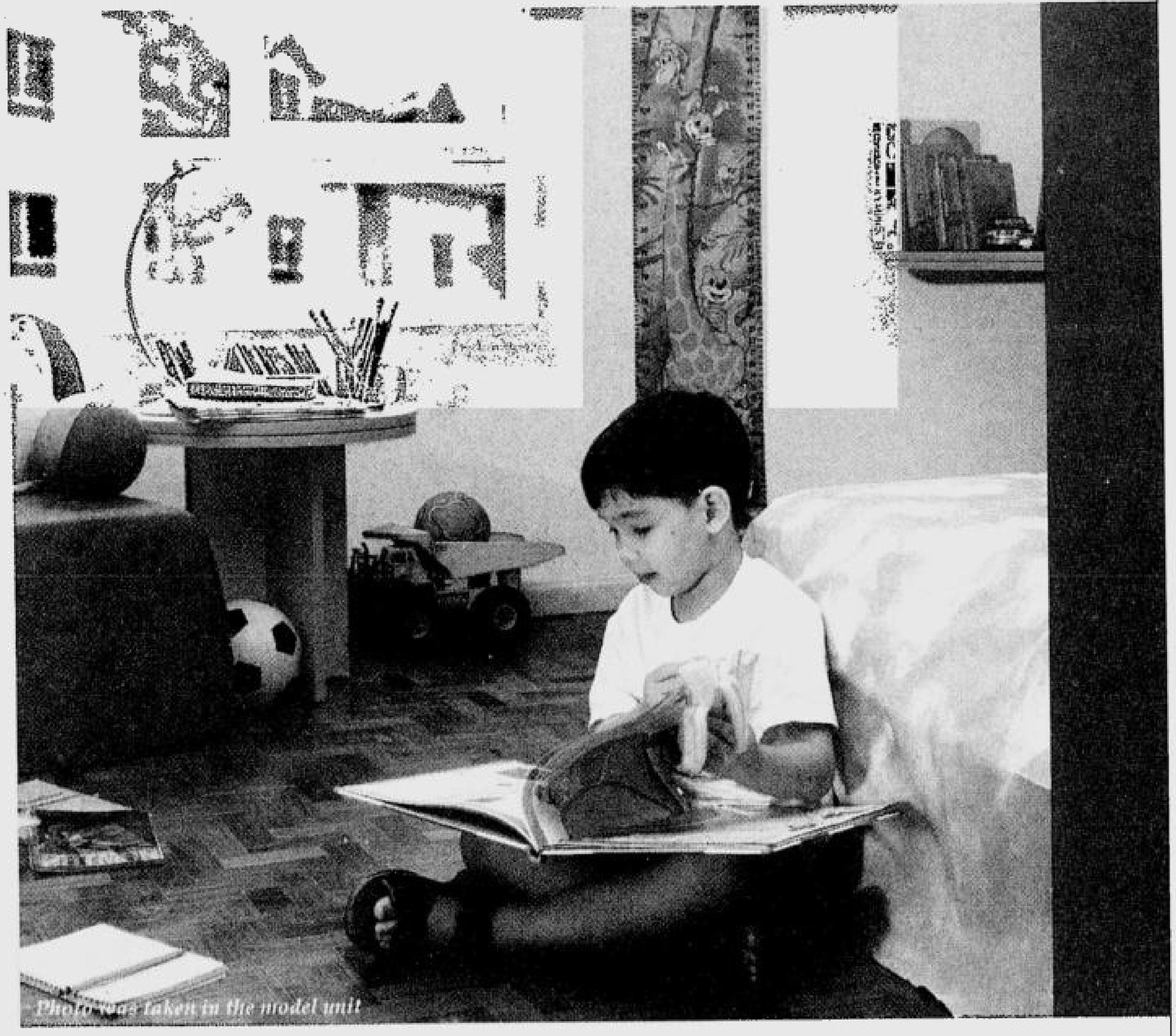
Photo was taken in the model unit

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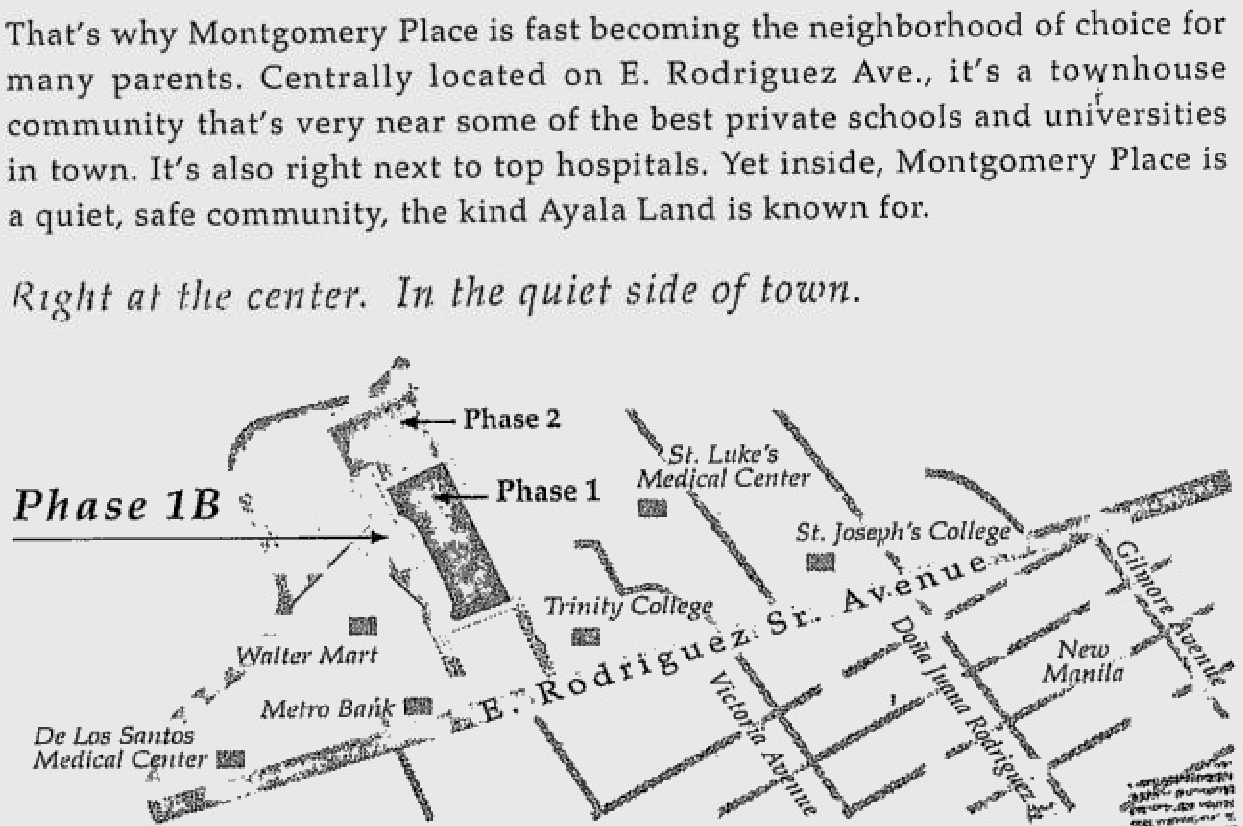

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Baguio, as designed by Bencab

From page F1

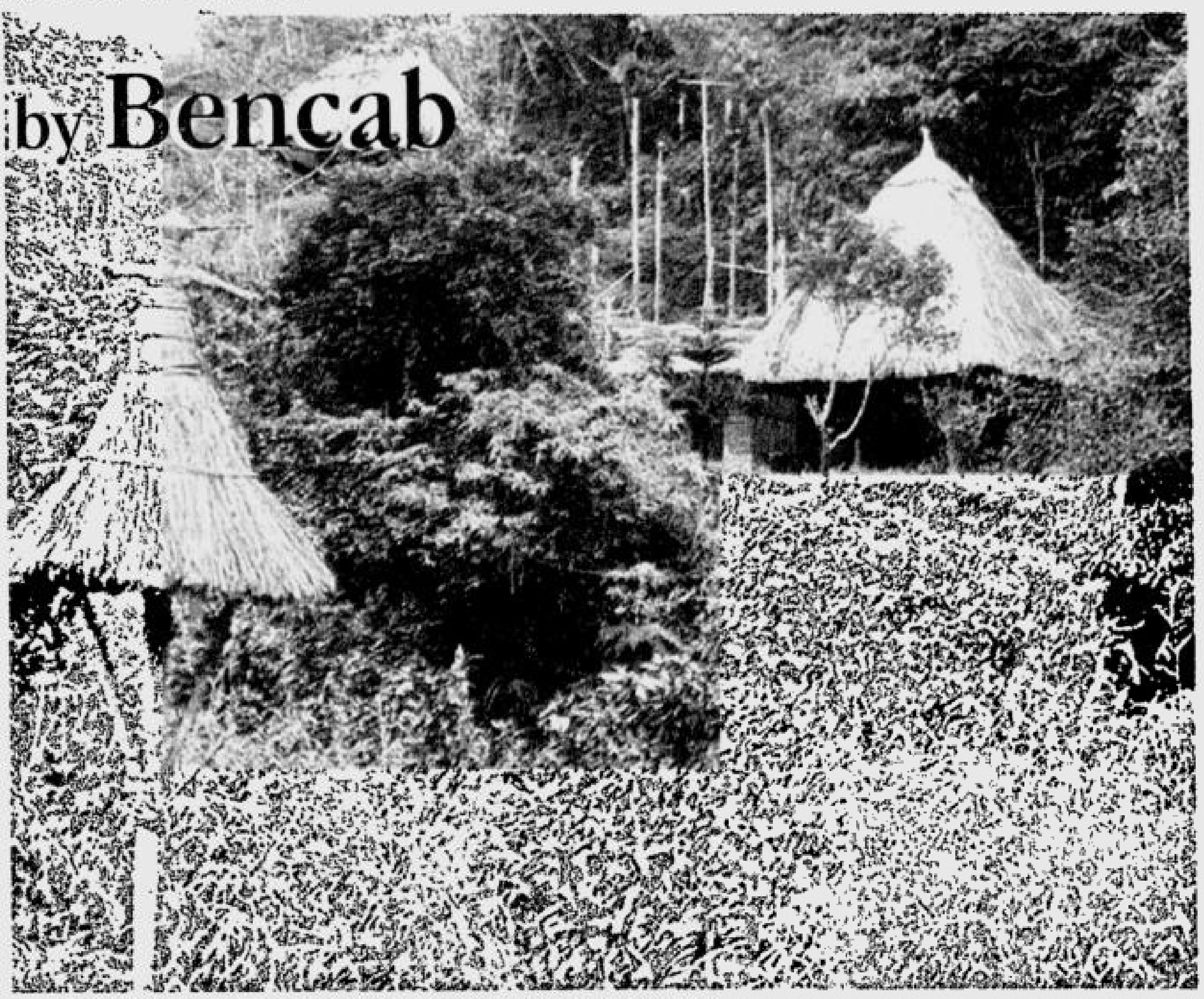
breathtaking view of the city skyline and catch the residues of the traffic noise, distant but intruding nonetheless. As Bencab said, he still isn't that far away from the city, no matter his private niche.

So he started building another refuge—another mountain away from the mountain, where he brought us after lunch. We drove about 6 km out of the city, to a handmade paper mill announced by a sign—KM6.

This Bencab's latest venture was our first find for the day. To add to the stationery and card line of indigenous paper were vests, hats, bags and fashion accessories. The handmade paper was crocheted and "sewn" into a vest in oatmeal color. Since Old World craftsmanship remains the vogue in today's fashion, this intricately crocheted handmade-paper vest should be a hot buy.

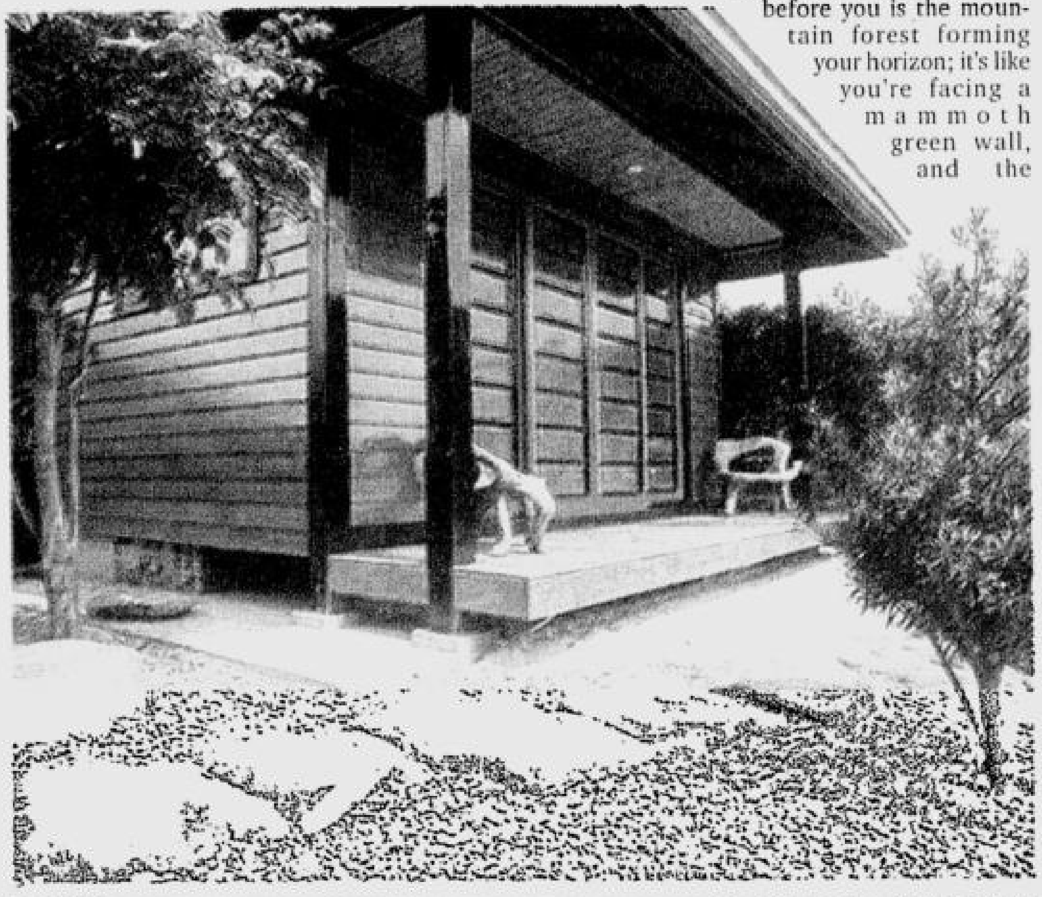
From the mill we trekked downhill to Bencab's new "garden." As we went farther and farther down, what we saw made us gasp in awe. This wasn't just a "garden," this was Eden.

Wrapped around one side of the mountain are "rice terraces" Bencab has had built—tiers of stonewalls to be planted to a variety of ornamentals, flowering plants and whatever kind Bencab takes fancy to. As you go down the rough steps, looming larger before you is the mountain forest forming your horizon; it's like you're facing a mammoth green wall, and the only line separating you from it is a flowing stream.



IFUGAO huts in Tam-awan

PHOTOS: JOVEL LORENZO FOR METRO MAGAZINE



BENCAB'S guestroom in the garden

Now, this is Bencab's giant canvas designed for him by nature itself. With the "rice terraces" on one side and the vibrant green forest before you, this is solitude for an artist at its luxurious best—the utmost stimulus to one's creativity. It can't get any better than that.

Before we could even have our fill of the environment, Bencab had us tagging along for a trek up and down his "mountain," because he wanted us to see the waterfall he had just discovered.

A survivor of the Batad rice terraces in Banaue, I had no fear doing the trail—my "aero" for the day, I said. My staff didn't have either. The trek was kind of rough but manageable and short, and there at the end of it was the waterfall, in a setting that Bencab and his workers have yet to polish.

Now the walk back was another matter. A staffer quipped, "Can we take the taxi back?" Actually, he was mock-whining. The return trip was much shorter, and the reward even greater—a cup of steaming Bontoc coffee and *barako*.

As we drove back to his studio, we told ourselves how Bencab is truly blessed, but more important, how artists like him have a way of giving back their blessing to the community, Baguio in this case.

Bencab and the highland artists are doing fine in Tam-awan, the artists' village of Baguio that is now quite known. They have reforested the mountain where their village is, made it more lush, and transplanted Ifugao huts there, now numbering 12.

These authentic huts are rented out to tourists and other visitors. One of them is dubbed the "fertility hut" for the obvious reason that a childless couple or two, or even more, has had results after spending the night there.

Tam-awan remains active—holding regular exhibits, an art and crafts shop selling the artists' works, from paintings to lamps with woven frames and handpainted shades (that's another find). That afternoon, they were around to share a meal with us—**Bay-an**, **Ged Alangui**, **Rishab**, **Jordan Mang-osan**, who, with his father **James**, will exhibit their arts and crafts next week at Tam-awan.

Bencab has led these artists for two decades now. It's quite gratifying to come across an artist like Bencab who, after building fame and fortune from his art, still has the urge to share his time, knowledge—his blessings in general—with his colleagues and community in general.

As the book on him will show, Bencab has led a full and interesting life, always riding the crest of a culture era—the hippies '60s, the bohemian and anti-establishment '70s, the Edsa-ish '80s, the pro-establishment '90s. He wasn't only there, he also maximized each era, squeezed it of every learning and experience he could, to serve his art, and just as important, to get a life and evolve it. This much you glean from the coffee-table book (launched last night), where **Krip Yuson** wrote the bio and **Cid Reyes** analyzed his art.

It says something of the man that, through the decades, he has kept the interest, if not the obsession, of his collectors. Manolo and Maritess, for example, who left no stone unturned to publish this book, have been studying and collecting his art since the '70s—a connection that has led to deep bonding.

Among his collectors is **Paul McCartney**, who bought his acrylic titled "Fishing in Sexmoan" (in Pampanga where Bencab's parents hailed), in 1966, during the infamous performance here of the Beatles. Paul went to Mabini where this painting caught his eye. Paul still has this in his collection and even gave Bencab his permission to include the painting in the book.

Another famous collector is **Glenda Jackson**, who has a few works of Bencab, acquired when Glenda's husband had a gallery in Greenwich, England.

We felt privileged to have edited this coffee-table book, and even more privileged to have spent a private time with him last Monday night in his studio. Tired from the day's shoot, my staff and I settled down with him over red wine, and got to know the man even more.

As we traded stories with him, we realized how Ben Cabrera's life is a series of self-discoveries, and not only where his art is concerned (which spans a gamut of media, from pen and ink, gouache, print, photography, acrylic to sculpture).

Each day is a discovery for him, whether it's a canvas he's finishing, a bonsai he's growing, or a rice terrace he's designing. We stared at the fire burning in his *dap-ay* (a cluster of stone seats where, as highland customs have it, the male elders gather around a fire) and asked him why and how his home has such interesting features.

"When you live alone, you have to interest and entertain yourself," he said, describing how an artist, even in his routine of solitude, has no dull moment.

He realizes how through the years the blessings seem to fall on his lap, and he has a philosophical way of explaining why: "The effort must be effortless," meaning, one must learn to go with the flow and not try too hard.

Bencab does tai chi and applies this to his life: "Find the middle way; don't lock yourself into a movement, so you're free to move on, either to advance or to step back."

Never locking yourself in. Perhaps this is how Bencab has not lost his sense of wonder; how, at 60, he's managed to stay young and open to surprise learnings.

That day with Bencab showed us how the man has many layers to him and his life. And it took this multilayered man to show us the other layers of Baguio as well—the sights and images off the beaten track.

So skip Baguio and the Philippines? It's the world's loss, more than ours—because we have our interesting land and our interesting people like Bencab.

Missing Sto. Niño

IT'S tragic that the ivory Sto. Niño from the Bangko Sentral collection has been missing. The Central Bank collection was painstakingly put together by then governor **Jaime C. Laya**. From visual arts to the gold-jewelry collection, its value to the country is unquantifiable.

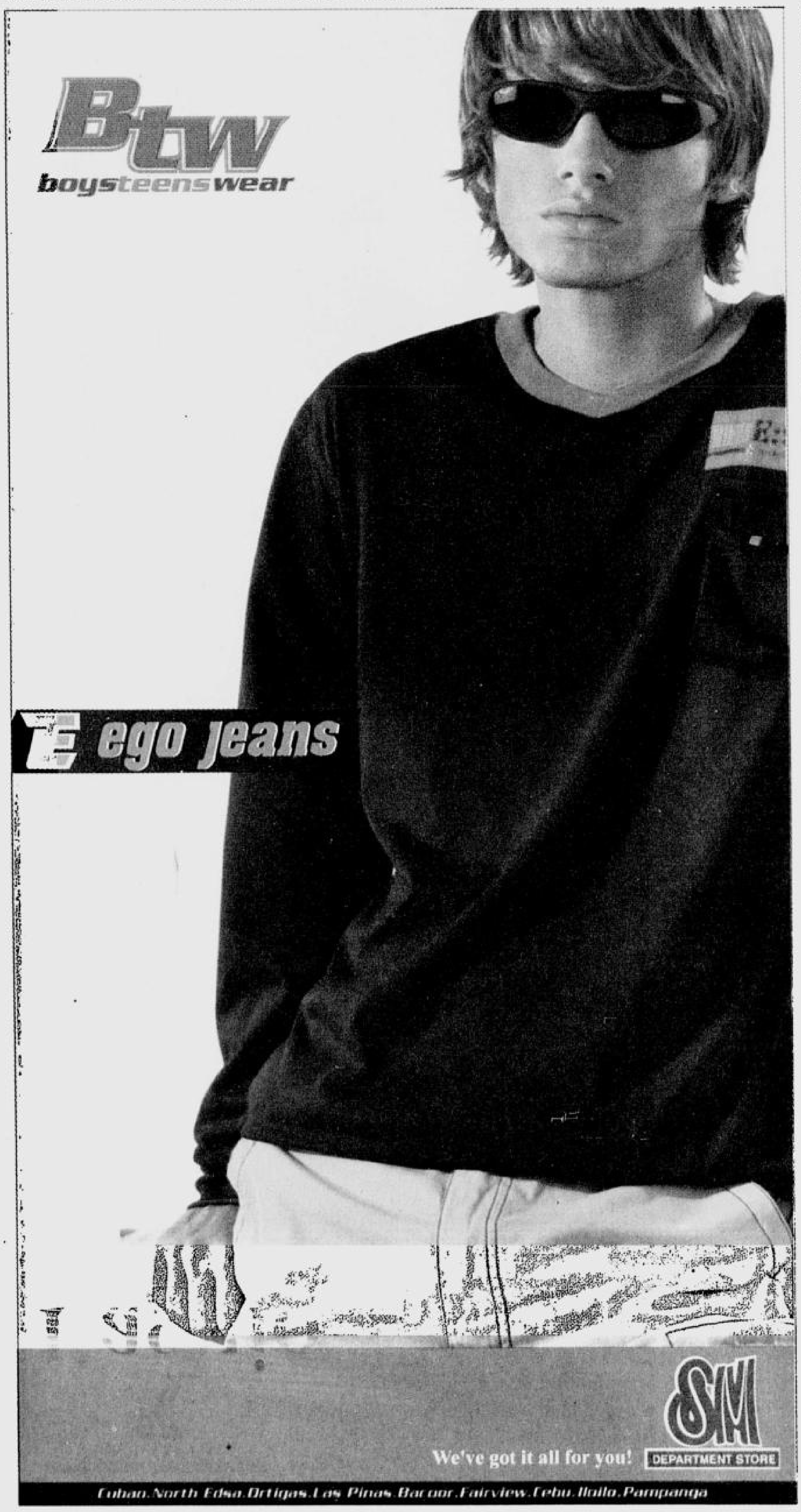
And in this priceless collection, it is this small ivory Sto. Niño that I remember most since Laya would show it to me every time I dropped by his office then, because he knew how we found the sight of the sleeping Child Jesus almost beguiling.

Another sad news is that Luz Gallery is closing down in December, after 42 years. National Artist **Arturo Luz**, Bencab told us, feels he has neither the steam nor the energy to maintain the gallery. With the closing, we lose another pillar of Philippine culture.

Artist/writer/bon vivant **Claude Tayag** and friends have opened a design store at Greenbelt, called About Design. Now you don't have to drive to Pampanga to get his rare designs in wood—from furniture to kitchen stuff. Of course, a few of his lines are also to be found in the store above **Larry Cruz**'s Bistro Remedios in Malate.

E-mail the author at tsanjuan@link.com.ph

HIS garden leading to his bonsai plants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